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A TREATISE

ON THE

EUCHARISTIC MYSTERY

OR

DEFENCE OF THE CATHOLIC DOGMA

OF THE

EUCHARIST

AGAINST THE RECENT ATTACKS OF ADVERSARIES.

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My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. — *John* vi. 56.

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PREFACE.

This Treatise owes its origin chiefly to the publication of a small volume issued from the Episcopalian press in the spring of the year 1843, under the following title: "The Book of Ratramn, the priest and monk of Corbey, on the body and blood of the Lord." As the avowed object of that publication was to spread, if possible, a belief among the people, that the Book of Ratramn affords a strong support to the Protestant system on the subject of the Eucharist; it was but natural to expect that Catholics would not be slow in defeating the claims of Episcopalians, and showing that their pretensions are groundless. This was done in the October and July numbers of the U. S. Catholic Magazine, of the same year, 1843. It required no great labor to prove that Ratramn's work could do no harm whatever to the Catholic, and no service to the Protestant cause; particularly, as its translator and publishers themselves seemed to be conscious of the deficiency of their

claim, not having permitted the work to appear without an English version, which, (though unknowingly perhaps on the part of the American editors,) alters the sense of the original in several important passages.

But there is a still more important question, the discussion of which has been also provoked by the same persons, and, we think, with infinite disadvantage to their party; namely, what was the belief of the Church, not only at the time when Ratramn wrote his book, but likewise during all preceding as well as succeeding ages. Concerning this point also, it was proved from a variety of facts and documents, that nothing is wanting to secure the triumph of Catholics, and that the faith which they actually profess about the real presence and transubstantiation, was the unequivocal, unanimous and uninterrupted belief of their Christian ancestors as far back as the time of the Apostles; (see U. S. Catholic Magazine, August number for 1843, and January number for 1844.) So numerous, however, are the proofs of their doctrine, that much more might have been said for its support; and as, on the other hand, the perusal of the controversy which was carried on for some months on this subject, was confined to a limited number of readers, it has been thought advisable by several persons of learning, wisdom and experience, to publish the vindication of the Catholic

dogma under a more accessible form, and with additional evidences; without however exceeding the limits of a small volume. It would, in fact, seem an unpardonable negligence on the part of Catholics, if they failed to improve the favorable opportunity thus afforded them, to establish in the face of the world, the antiquity, the perpetuity and the unshaken grounds of their doctrine.

Such is then the object of the little Treatise which we now offer to the public. That it may be conducive to the glory of Christ in his divine sacrament, by strengthening Catholics in their holy faith, and aiding the truth to find its way to the minds and hearts of their Protestant neighbors, is the only desire of the author.

He has endeavored to make his work neither too abridged nor too lengthy; not so abridged as to omit any thing essential, nor so lengthy as to fatigue the attention of his readers. With regard to the frequent and consecutive use of the words *real presence* and *transubstantiation*, he begs leave to observe, that it is not, as some might perhaps be inclined to think, either tautology or an oversight; but that it is required by the very nature of the subject. Both these terms are necessary fully to express the Catholic dogma of the sacrament of the holy Eucharist; the former signifying simply that Christ is *truly present* in it, and the latter adding to this,

that he is present there *in virtue of the change* which he himself effects through the ministry of his priests, of the whole substance of the bread and wine into the substance of his body and blood. Since, therefore, the words *real presence* and *transubstantiation* are not exactly synonymous, it was requisite to make use of both, in order to leave no room for equivocation and cavil. It was proper moreover, especially in a theological tract like this, to place them generally together, because the divine truths which they express being equally revealed, and having been inseparably connected by the omnipotent will of Christ, ought to be equally and inseparably admitted.

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TREATISE

ON THE EUCHARISTIC MYSTERY.

STATEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE.

According to the Catholic doctrine, the truth of which it will be our object to vindicate, the Eucharist is a sacrament which contains truly, really and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine. This name, *Eucharist*, comes from the Greek word Εὐχαριστία, which signifies *thanksgiving*, and is very properly used to designate this divine Sacrament, since the holy Eucharist was instituted by our Lord immediately after he gave thanks to his Father, and since it is for us the best and most efficacious means to give due thanks to Almighty God for all his blessings. It is also called *Communion*, because it closely connects all the faithful together as members of the same body, and unites them most intimately with Christ whom they receive within themselves, in order that they may,

according to his own promise, *abide in him, and he in them.**

Again, the Eucharist is designated by the name of *Holy Mysteries, of Blessed and Most Holy Sacrament*, because it contains and imparts to us, not only sanctifying grace, but the author of grace himself, the Holy of Holies and the inexhaustible source of all sanctity. In fine, it is called *Viaticum*, when administered to persons in danger of death, because it is then intended to be their support in their last passage, and to enable them to reach safely the mansions of eternal bliss.

Under this variety of names, the holy Eucharist is justly exhibited to us as one of the most signal benefits of the Almighty, and the complement, as it were, of all the mysteries of our Redemption.—That an infinite and eternal God should have become man for our sake and have suffered upon a cross for our salvation, is a miracle of the divine mercy, goodness and love, which eternity itself will not be able sufficiently to praise: but, that the same God should choose to remain constantly with us in the Eucharist, and thus give himself entirely to us under the appearances of bread and wine, must not be accounted a less stupendous miracle, and deserves to be called the abridgment of all his wonders; "He hath made a remembrance of his wonderful works, being a merciful and gracious Lord, he hath given food to them that fear him."†

Bread, made of pure flour, is taken by the priest, and offered to God: outwardly no change takes place, and the appearances of bread remain; yet, its whole substance is, by the divine power and through the words of consecration, changed into the substance of

* John vi. 57. † Ps. cx. 4, 5.

the body of Christ. The like happens to the wine in the chalice, its whole substance being also converted into the substance of our Saviour's blood; and as "Christ, rising again from the dead, dieth now no more,"* his blood and his soul as well as his divinity are on that account, together with his body, under the appearance of bread; and likewise, his body and soul and divinity are together with his blood, under the appearance of wine.†

This being a mystery so far exalted above the senses and imagination, it is by no means astonishing that it should have been attacked on several occasiens by the pride and vain curiosity of men. Yet, more than eight centuries elapsed, ere any one dared to oppose it in an open and direct manner; so steady and universal was its belief in the minds of the faithful. Hence, when the Manicheans and other ancient heretics denied the real presence, this was only by way of consequence, and because they also denied that Christ had taken the reality of human flesh at his coming into the world. The first, then, who dared to rise against it by a direct and open attack, was John Scotus Erigena, a man of very little repute for soundness of judgment among his own contemporaries. He had no followers, and his error on the Eucharist, broached towards the middle, was buried with him before the end of the ninth century. Being revived about two hundred years later by Berengarius, archdeacon of Angers, it was refuted by all the learned men of that period, and condemned in many councils: several times did Berengarius himself retract it, and more than once, too, did he "return to his own vomit;" till at length he died,

* Rom. vi. 9. † See Council of Trent, Sess. xiii. cap. 3.

as it appears, a sincere penitent and in Catholic senti ments, A. D. 1088.

The storm, raised in the sixteenth century, by Luther against transubstantiation, and by Zuinglius, Carlostadius and Calvin against the real presence, was much more violent. At that period, many persons tired of the restraint put upon their pride and passions by the tenets and maxims of the Catholic Church, readily gave credence to all the misrepresentations and calumnies which had been disseminated against her, withdrew from her communion, and entangled themselves, chiefly on the subject of the Eucharist, in that variety of prejudices and errors in which their descendants are still involved. Against these novelties, the Council of Trent defended the ancient and apostolic faith, by declaring that Christ is present in the Eucharist, not barely in sign and figure, as Carlostadius and Zuinglius thought, but *truly;* not by a mere apprehension of our mind, or by a sort of power and virtue only, as Calvin and his followers imagined, but *really* and *substantially,* the whole substance of the bread and wine being, contrary also to Luther's opinion, changed into the sacred body and blood of our Saviour.

Such is the important subject of which we undertake to treat in this little volume. We divide it into two parts. The first, which may be called *historical,* will establish the antiquity and perpetuity of the Catholic faith on the holy Eucharist. The second, chiefly *dogmatical,* will present the manifold and unshaken grounds of our belief and doctrine concerning the real presence and transubstantiation.

PART I.

PERPETUITY OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH ON THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

It is unfortunately true, and it has been a thousand times proved by experience, that individuals may deviate from the path of sound doctrine, and by following the wanderings of their imagination, fall into the abyss of error. But that the same should ever happen to the Church of Christ is absolutely impossible. It is impossible, for instance, that, if our Lord were not substantially present in the Eucharist, and never taught the dogma of transubstantiation to his Apostles, nor his Apostles to the primitive Christians, that the Church should have ever been induced to admit these doctrines; and *vice versâ*, if these doctrines have been at any period believed by the whole Church, as they certainly were, *e. g.*, at the beginning of the pretended reformation, and also when Berengarius appeared towards the middle of the eleventh century, it is impossible that they should not have been always believed from the very origin of Christianity. Otherwise how could the Church be called "the pillar and ground of the truth?" (1 Tim. iii. 15.) How could it be said that "the gates of hell shall never prevail against her," nor shake her from the immovable rock upon which she was founded? (Matt. xvi. 18, and vii. 25.)

How could "the Spirit of truth have abided with her for ever," (John xiv. 16, 17,) and Christ been with her "all days, even to the consummation of the world?" (Matt. xxviii. 20.) In the Protestant system, all these divine promises are but empty sounds without effect; and if so, we can no longer place implicit reliance on the words of Christ, and the whole of his religion must yield to the assaults of the deist and infidel! Who can admit a principle or supposition, the consequences of which thus manifestly lead to the entire overthrow of Christianity itself?

Again, if the Christian Church, as our opponents assert, did not admit transubstantiation and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist during all the ages previous to the ninth or tenth century, it must have been because she could not reconcile herself to the idea of Christ's real body having been left us for the nourishment of our souls, though he himself had said: "The bread which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world. . . . . For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." (John vi. 52, 56.) It must have been that these words appeared too hard as well to her as to many of our Lord's hearers, and that, instead of imitating those who said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life," (ib. 68,) she preferred to say with others: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (ib. 53.) But let it be remembered by whom the latter words were uttered: they fell from the lips of the obstinate Jews, and of several inconstant and unhappy disciples who then abandoned Christ and walked no more with him, (ib. 67.) Will it be said, then, that the Church, during nine centuries, the first of her existence, involved herself in the fate of those unhappy men, and,

by imitating their unbelief, had, like them, no part with our divine Saviour? Let those assert it, if they will, who may be disposed to assert every thing, except that the Catholics are in the right; as for us, we cannot entertain an opinion so injurious at once to the Church of Christ, and to his providential care for the work of his hands.

Who, moreover, can better attest the antiquity and perpetuity of a doctrine, than the society by which it is universally revered and professed; particularly a society so venerable for its antiquity, so fruitful in learned and holy men, so invariably attached from principle to her doctrines and practices, as the Catholic Church most assuredly is? How forcible, likewise, must her testimony appear, when we see it confirmed by the testimony of those who are her adversaries on other points, viz: the eastern sects of the schismatic Greeks, Armenians, Jacobites, Nestorians, who have now been separated from her for the space of eight, ten, or fourteen hundred years! In fact, all these agree with her in referring their belief of transubstantiation and of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, to the primitive times, and to the very origin of Christianity.* What evidence shall we admit, if we may reject evidence like this? What fact shall we believe, if we do not believe a fact grounded upon such a constant and unanimous testimony of very many nations, otherwise differing from each other in several points of doctrine, in language, laws, customs, etc., and how can, in reality, the common belief of these various Churches on the subject of the Eucharist be accounted for, otherwise than by referring its

* Of this we shall give abundant proofs hereafter, part II. ch. iii.

origin to one common cause, namely, the faith of the primitive Church and the preaching of the Apostles?

These considerations should surely suffice to demonstrate the perpetuity of the Catholic faith on the holy Eucharist; yet, as particular evidences commonly produce a greater impression on the mind than general arguments, we shall now proceed, *ad superabundantiam juris*, to show the truth of our assertion — 1. by adducing the words of the ancient Fathers and Councils, especially those passages which not only imply the real and substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist, but also directly establish the dogma of transubstantiation; 2. by showing the absolute impossibility of any innovation having ever taken place in the faith of the Church about this sacred mystery.

CHAPTER I.

SERIES OF TESTIMONIES FROM THE HOLY FATHERS, DOCTORS AND COUNCILS.

To begin with the age which immediately followed that of the Apostles, we have first the testimony of *St. Ignatius*, disciple of St. John and bishop of Antioch. Speaking of certain heretics of his time, he says: "they abstain from the Eucharist, because they do not acknowledge it to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father by his goodness resuscitated."*

Next comes *St. Justin*, a Christian philosopher, who suffered martyrdom at Rome about the year 166, in the persecution of Marcus Aurelius: "As Jesus Christ," says he, "made man by the word of God, took

* Epist. ad Smyrn.

flesh and blood for our salvation; in the same manner we have been taught, that the food which has been blessed by the prayer of the words that he spoke, and by which our blood and flesh in the change are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus incarnate."*

St. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, who also suffered martyrdom, A. D. 202, under Septimius Severus, speaks as follows: "When the mingled chalice and the broken bread receive the word of God, they become the Eucharist — which is the body and blood of Christ."†

St. Hilary, bishop of Poitiers in the fourth century: "Of the natural verity of Christ in us, whatever we speak, we speak foolishly and wickedly, unless we learn of him; for it is he that said, *my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* There is no place to doubt the truth of Christ's flesh and blood: for now, by the profession of the Lord himself, and according to our belief, it is truly flesh and truly blood."‡

St. Cyril of Jerusalem: "As Christ, speaking of the bread, declared and said, *this is my body*, who shall dare to doubt it? And, as speaking of the wine, he positively assured us and said, *this is my blood*, who shall doubt it, and say that it is not his blood? Jesus Christ, in Cana of Galilee, changed water into wine by his will only; and shall we think him less worthy of credit, when he changes wine into blood? . . . . Judge not of the thing by your taste, but by faith assure yourself without the least doubt, that you are honored with the body and blood of Christ. This

* Apol. 1. ad imper. Anton. † Advers. hæres. L. v.
‡ De Trinit. L. viii.

knowing and of this being assured, that what appears to be bread, is not bread, though it be taken for bread by the taste, but the body of Christ; and that what appears to be wine, is not wine, though the taste will have it so, but the blood of Christ."* In this passage of St. Cyril, we have almost as many proofs against the Protestant system, as there are not only sentences, but even words. What Catholic of the present day could express the dogma of transubstantiation better than this learned and holy doctor of the ancient Church did, in explaining to the Neophytes or newly baptized, the Christian doctrine on the subject of the Eucharist?†

St. Ephrem, deacon of Edessa: "You believe that Christ, the Son of God, for you was born in the flesh? Then why do you search into what is inscrutable? Doing this you prove your curiosity, not your faith. Believe then, and with a firm faith receive the body and blood of our Lord. Abraham placed earthly food before the celestial spirits, of which they ate. This was wonderful. But what Christ has done for us, greatly exceeds this, and transcends all speech and all conception. To us that are in the flesh, he has given to eat his body and blood. . . . His body, by a new method, is mixed with our bodies, and his most pure blood is transfused into our veins. He is wholly incorporated with us; and because he loved his Church, he was made the bread of life, that he might give himself to be eaten."‡

* Catech. Mystag. iv.

† We shall, in another place, give at greater length the words of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, together with those of St. Ambrose, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Cyril of Alexandria.

‡ De Naturâ Dei minimè scrutandâ, et Hymn. xxxvii. De Virginitate.

St. Basil the Great, archbishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia: "About the things that God hath spoken, there should be no hesitation nor doubt, but a firm persuasion that all is true and possible, though nature be against it. . . . With what fear, with what conviction, with what affection of mind, should we partake of the body and blood of Christ! The Apostle teaches us to fear, when he says, *he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself;* while the words of the Lord, *this is my body which shall be delivered for you*, create a firm conviction."*

St. Gregory, bishop of Nyssa and brother of St. Basil: "The bread sanctified by the word of God and prayer, is instantly changed into the body of Christ, agreeably to what he said, *this is my body.*"†

St. Gaudentius, bishop of Brescia in Italy: "He who is the Creator and Lord of all natures, who produces bread from the earth, of the bread makes his own proper body, (for he is able and he promised to do it;) and of the wine he makes his blood. *O the depth of the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of God!* (Rom. xi. 33.) It is the pasch, that is, the passover of the Lord: think not that earthly which is made heavenly by him, who passes into it, and has made it his body and blood."‡

The words of *St. John Chrysostom*, the illustrious archbishop of Constantinople, are not less explicit nor less remarkable: "Let us," says he, "believe God in every thing, and not gainsay him, although what is said may seem contrary to our reason and our sight. Let his word overpower both.—Since his word says, *this is my body*, let us assent and believe. . . . Pa-

* In Regul. † Orat. Catech. c. 37. ‡ Tract II. De Pasch.

rents often give their children to be nourished by others; not so I, says Christ: but I nourish you with my flesh, and I place myself before you. I was willing to become your brother; for the sake of you I took flesh and blood, and again I deliver to you that flesh and blood by which I became so related." — Again: "He that was present at the last supper, is the same that is now present and consecrates our feast. For, it is not man who makes the things on the altar become the body and blood of Christ; but that Christ who was crucified for us. The priest stands performing his office, and pronouncing these words; but the power and grace are the power and grace of God. He says, *this is my body*, and these words effect the change of the things offered."*

The great bishop of Hippo, *St. Augustine*, writes thus: "Christ took upon him earth from the earth, because flesh is from the earth, and this flesh is from the flesh of Mary; and because he here walked in this flesh, even this same flesh he gave us to eat for our salvation. But no one eateth this flesh, without having first adored it; and not only do we not sin by adoring, but we even sin by not adoring it."†

The age of St. Augustine furnishes us with another splendid testimony of the same belief and doctrine, in these words of *St. Nilus*, a priest and monk of Sina: "Before the prayer of the priest and the coming of the Holy Spirit, the things laid on the table are common bread and wine; but after the solemn invocations and the descent of the adorable Spirit, it is no longer that bread and that wine, but it is the body and the pure and precious blood of Christ, the God of all."‡

* Homil. 83 in Matth. — Homil. 46 in Joan. — et I. De Prodit. Judæ. †In Psalm. xcviii. ‡ L. I. Ep. xliv.

St. Gregory the Great, Pope, who died in 604, speaking of our Lord in the character of the good shepherd, says: "That good shepherd laid down his life for his sheep, that in our Sacrament he might produce by a change his body and blood, and feed with the aliment of his flesh the sheep which he had redeemed."*

Venerable Bede, that admirable doctor and light of the Anglo-Saxon Church, as he is usually termed, says likewise; "When we celebrate Mass, we again immolate to the Father the sacred body and the precious blood of the Lamb, with which we have been redeemed from our sins."†

We will close this series of quotations from the Holy Fathers who lived in the first eight ages of the Church, with these words of *St. John Damascene*, whose death occurred about the year 780: "You ask how does the bread become the body, and the wine mixed with some water the blood of Christ; I answer, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, who can do much more than we can understand. As the bread which we eat, and the wine and water which we drink, are naturally changed into our body and blood: so the bread and the wine laid on the altar are, by the invocation, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, miraculously changed into the body and blood of Christ."‡

To the reader, these passages in favor of the Catholic dogma of Christ's real and substantial presence in the Eucharist, and likewise of transubstantiation, must appear sufficiently explicit and intelligible. No mention is here made of a presence merely in sign, figure or virtue, nor of a merely symbolical change; on the

* Homil. xiv. in Evang. † Homil. in Vig. Pasch.
‡ De Fide Orthod. L. iv. c. 14.

contrary, all this is positively excluded by the Fathers. According to them, as well as to modern Catholics, "we ought not to dispute against the word of God, nor trust to our reason and senses; after the consecration, there are no longer bread and wine in the Eucharist, although their appearances remain; the bread has been miraculously changed, by the divine power, into the body of Christ, and the wine into his blood; the same flesh is present on the altar, which was taken from the Blessed Virgin, which was crucified for us," etc., and the reality of these wonders "does not admit of the slightest doubt, when we consider the texts of the Gospel, the positive asseveration of our Lord, and the prodigies wrought by the Divine Omnipotence on other occasions, the Creation, the Incarnation, the change of the water into wine in Cana of Galilee," etc. Could the learned and sainted authors of these expressions have asserted the real presence and transubstantiation in stronger and clearer terms? Had they, fourteen or sixteen hundred years ago, foreseen the Protestant doctrine on this point, could they have refuted it more effectually than they did? and would not the man who should attempt to pervert their meaning, be equally justifiable in producing the words of our catechisms or of the Council of Trent itself, and with a total disregard of truth, assert that they do not mean any such thing as the real presence and transubstantiation?

What we wish, however, to be chiefly noticed here, is that the doctrine of the Holy Fathers on the Eucharistic mystery was no other than that of the Church during the ages in which they lived. It is evident that they proposed it as such to their hearers and readers, since they either spoke of it as of a truth uni-

versally known to the faithful, (as did, among others, St. Justin, St. Augustine, Venerable Bede;) or made it the subject of their catechetical instructions, (St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Gaudentius of Brescia, St. Cyril of Jerusalem;) or expatiated upon it in their homilies and discourses, in order to increase the piety and devotion of their flocks towards this sacred mystery, (St. Gregory the Great, St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom;) or made use of it as an unquestionable principle to guard the faithful against the error of the Gnostics, who denied that Christ had taken a real body in the Incarnation, (St. Ignatius, St. Irenæus;) or, in fine, numbered it in their didactic letters and treatises among the principal tenets of the Christian faith, (St. Hilary, St. Ephrem, St. Nilus, St. John Damascene.)

Hence, these instructions of the Fathers, whether first delivered by word of mouth or published in their writings, far from meeting with any opposition, as would certainly have been the case if they had savored of novelty, were on the contrary received every where with the greatest applause and respect, as containing the pure belief of the Church from the time of the Apostles. Hence too was their doctrine, whenever the occasion required, solemnly sanctioned by the acts and decrees of General Councils. The Council of Ephesus, for instance, in 431, approved the following dogmatical decision already passed against the Nestorian heresy, by the patriarch St. Cyril and the provincial synod of Alexandria: "We offer the unbloody sacrifice in the churches; we approach to the mystic thanksgivings, and are thus sanctified, being made partakers of *the sacred flesh* and precious blood of Christ, the Saviour of us all. For we receive *it* not

as common flesh; far be this thought from us; but as the truly vivifying and proper flesh of the Word made man."* — The second Council of Nice, at which three hundred and fifty bishops were present, made also this solemn declaration, (A. D. 787:) "Never has it been said by our Lord, or by the Apostles, or by the Fathers, that the unbloody sacrifice offered by the priests is only an image of Christ, but they have called it his true body and blood. The elements have indeed the name of antitypes, before they are sanctified; but after the consecration, they are called, they are believed to be, and they really are the body and the blood of Christ."†

It is, therefore, as plain as the light of day, that the whole Church, from her very origin, constantly believed, professed and taught the dogma of transubstantiation, and of the true, real and substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist. It is manifest that the assertion so boldly advanced by the enemies of this dogma, viz. that Paschasius Radbertus, in the ninth century, was the first who propounded it, is contrary to all historical evidence, and argues in its authors, if not insincerity, at least a surprising ignorance of the history of religion.‡ This celebrated

* Concil. Ephes. Apud Labbeum, Collect. Concil. vol. iii. p. 404.

† Conc. Nic. ii., Act. 6. — Labb. ib. vol. vii., p. 450.

‡ Our adversaries are not, after all, so much convinced of the accuracy of their statement, as not occasionally to overthrow it themselves. Thus we lately witnessed that, whilst they seemed to vie with each other in representing Paschasius as the originator of the dogma of transubstantiation, one of them unexpectedly expressed his opinion that there is no such thing "in the whole book of Paschasius;" (see the case stated in the tenth number of the Catholic Magazine, 1843, p. 611.) So true it is that the assumed task of

man was, it is true, the first who wrote *professedly and at length*, to use the expressions of Bellarmine, on the reality of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist; but it is not less true, that a multitude of other writers had in every preceding age expressed the very same belief and doctrine, as we have just proved, and as the same Bellarmine fully demonstrates in *his controversies*. Nor is this by any means surprising; nothing has happened here, that had not already happened about the other mysteries of the Christian faith. St. Athanasius was the first who wrote at length on the Holy Trinity; St. Cyril, the first who enlarged considerably upon the doctrine of the Incarnation; St. Austin, the first who treated in the same manner the question of Original sin. But, as the more ancient Fathers had often and clearly spoken of the Holy Trinity, of the Incarnation, of Original sin, without writing extensive and particular treatises on these mysteries; so also, had they often and clearly mentioned, in different parts of their works, the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, together with the change of the bread and wine into his body and blood, although they did not write long and separate books on the Eucharistic mystery. The task subsequently undertaken by Paschasius Radbertus consisted chiefly in collecting their different testimonies on this subject in one regular treatise; a task which he performed with extraordinary success, as will be mentioned here-

defending a desperate cause, can drive its abettors to the most opposite extremes. Whatever may have been their secret motive for adopting such an irregular and inconsistent course, one thing is certain, namely, that these two parties of theirs are equally in the wrong, and their contradictory assertions about Radbertus equally unjustifiable.

after; so that the very intent and contents of his book are a complete refutation of the charge so often and so absurdly brought against him as an innovator.

Not less preposterous is the argument which our opponents endeavor to derive from the use of the word *transubstantiation* itself. Confounding this word grammatically taken, with the dogma expressed by it, from the fact that this identical expression was not employed in the primitive times, although indeed it was equivalently used in the word *change* or *transmutation*, they conclude that the dogma was unknown to antiquity! Can there be a greater confusion of ideas? Can notions be more erroneous? Were this manner of reasoning admitted, it would follow, not only contrary to the truth, but also to the belief of the Protestants themselves, that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, of the Consubstantiality and Incarnation of the Son of God, was unknown in the time of the Apostles, and during the two or three first centuries of the Church, since the words *Trinity*, *Consubstantiality* and *Incarnation* began only to be employed at the close of that period. This consequence our present adversaries surely will not admit. Since, therefore, the later use of these words cannot in anywise be alleged against the Apostolic doctrine and the primitive belief of the mysteries which they express; so neither can the subsequent adoption in the Church of the word *Transubstantiation* be brought against the ancient faith and apostolic tradition of this dogma, which we have proved from so many unquestionable documents.

But our arguments do not end here, and we have yet to show that the same doctrine on the holy Eucha-

rist continued to he held in the ninth century and subsequently. It will be an easy task to do so, as, independently of various other evidences, the books alone of Paschasius Radbertus, the celebrated abbot of Corbey already spoken of, would suffice to answer our purpose and defeat all pretensions whatever to the contrary. This truly eminent scholar and divine, well acquainted with the Greek and Hebrew languages, deeply versed in the knowledge of Scripture and Tradition, which served alike to supply him with arguments, published about the year 831 his treatise on the Eucharist, in which, after reminding his readers of the omnipotence of God, which surpasses all human comprehension, he says: "We ought to believe that, after the consecration, what still appears to be bread and wine, is however nothing else than the body and blood of Christ. Of this, Truth itself assures us, saying: *This is my flesh for the life of the world.* . . . No one who believes the divine word, doubts the reality of the body and blood rendered present by the consecration of the mystery, as the same Truth has said: *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*"* The same doctrine he inculcates throughout his whole treatise, as also in his Commentary on the twenty-sixth chapter of St. Matthew, and finally in his letter to Frudegardus, the expressions of which are peculiarly remarkable: "After the prayer of the canon at mass, in which the priest begs of the Heavenly Father that the eucharistic elements *may become the body and blood of his most beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ*, all the people with unanimous voice answer *Amen;* and thus the whole Church of every

* De Verit. Corp. et Sang. Dom. ch. i. et iv.

nation and language, after having offered her prayers, confesses that what she prays for, has taken place. Let the person, then, who might be more inclined to contradict than to believe, see what he is doing against the Lord himself, and against the whole Church of Christ. It is an enormous crime to pray with all, and not to believe what Truth itself testifies, and what all Christians every where and unanimously confess to be true. Since Christ himself declares that it is his body and his blood, all doubt upon the subject must be dismissed." *

Now, one of these two things ought to be admitted; either what Paschasius repeatedly and publicly relates of the unanimous and universal belief of the Church in his time is incontestable, or that writer must have been insane thus to advance, in the face of the world, as notoriously true, what he knew to be notoriously false; and consequently, he should have been considered as the most despicable and impertinent man that ever attempted to write on any subject. But far from it, we find him esteemed, praised and respected, especially after the publication of his book on the Eucharist, by learned men, by princes and prelates, particularly the French bishops, twenty of whom, in their Council of Paris, (A. D. 846,) called him their venerable brother, *venerabilem fratrem Radbertum*, and readily confirmed at his request the privileges of the monastery of Corbey. His treatise was every where received with such applause and read with such satisfaction, that the author was induced to give a second edition of it, about thirteen years after its first publication. Instead of the multitude of adversaries

* Epist. ad Frudegard.

whom the lively imagination of some Protestant controvertists has arrayed against it, we find the whole crowd of contemporary authors (excepting however Scotus Erigena, whose writings were on that account condemned by the Church,) agree with Paschasius in relation to the *Catholic dogma* on the Eucharist. As this point has been extensively and satisfactorily proved by a host of learned critics and theologians,* we shall here adduce only some passages from the chief writings of that period.

Amalarius, deacon of Metz towards the year 840, says in his work on church offices: "We believe that the inanimate nature of the bread and of the wine mixed with some water, is changed into the rational nature of the body and blood of Christ."†

Florus, deacon of Lyons, who flourished about the same time, writes thus: "When the creature of bread and wine is, by the unspeakable operation of the Holy Ghost, changed into the body and blood of the Son of God, Christ is eaten. . . . It is he himself who, through the powerful benediction of the Divine Spirit, make the elements become his sacred body and blood."‡

Haymon, bishop of Halberstadt: "We believe and faithfully confess that the substance of the bread and wine is, through the operation of the divine

* See Mabillon, *Præfat. in 4um Sæculum Benedict.* Part II. Chapt. 1. pp. 282—329; — Ceillier, *Histoire des Auteurs Ecclèsiastiques*, vol. xix. pp. 77—148; — Natalis Alexander, *In Histor. Eccles. Sæc.* ix. *et* x., *Dissertat.* x—xv, vol. vi. pp. 337—371; — and the celebrated work of *Perpétuité de la foi De l'Eglise Catholique touchant l'Eucharistie*, vol. i. book viii.

† De Ecclesiasticis Officiis, lib. iii. c. 24.

‡ In Expositione Missæ.

power, substantially converted into another substance, that is to say, the flesh and blood of Christ. . . . In order to remove or diminish the repugnance and excessive awe which might otherwise prevent us from approaching; Almighty God, accommodating himself to our infirmity, wishes the taste and the figure of the bread and wine to remain in the Eucharist; but their substance is entirely converted into the body and the blood of Christ."*

Rabanus Maurus, archbishop of Mentz: "Who could believe that bread could be changed into flesh, and wine into blood, had not our Saviour himself said it,—He who created bread and wine, and made all things out of nothing? It is easier to make one thing out of another, than to create all things from nothing."†

Remigius, monk of St. German of Auxerre: "Since the Eucharist is truly the body of Christ, why is it called a mystery? The reason is, because after the consecration there seems to be another thing. It appears to be bread and wine, but in truth it is the body and blood of Jesus Christ. For, Almighty God condescending to our weakness, and seeing that we are not accustomed to eat crude flesh and to drink blood, has ordered that the things offered should continue in their previous form, although they are in reality the body and the blood of Christ. . . . As the divinity of the Word is one, though it fills the whole universe, so likewise, although this body is consecrated in many places and on an infinite number of days, it does not constitute many bodies of Christ nor many bloods,

* Tract. de Corp. et Sang. Domini.

† De Sacris Ordinibus, L. vii. c. x.

but one and the same body and blood, which our Lord took in the womb of the Virgin, and which he gave to his Apostles."*

All these authors lived during the course of the ninth century; the following names will serve as witnesses for the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Ratherius, bishop of Verona, writes as follows: "Believe, dear brother, that exactly as in Cana of Galilee, water became, by the command of God, true and not figurative wine, — so here wine, by the divine blessing, becomes true and not figurative blood, and bread becomes flesh. Although the color and the taste remain, believe that it is the real flesh and blood of the Lord, being assured of this mystery by Truth itself."†

The belief of *St. Dunstan*, archbishop of Canterbury, and of the Anglo-Saxon Church, is made manifest from what Osbertus relates of that holy prelate: "Having returned to the altar, he (St. Dunstan) changed by the immaculate benediction, the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. When the moment arrived to bless the people, wishing to address them again, he again withdrew from the altar, and being filled with the Spirit of God, he spoke so eloquently of the reality of Christ's body, of the future resurrection and eternal life, that one might have taken him for an inhabitant of the heavenly Jerusalem."‡

St. Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, has the following words: "It is a crime to doubt whether He who created all things out of nothing, can, by the same om-

* In Expos. Missæ. † Epist. ad Patric. Sacerd.
‡ In Vit. St. Dunst.

nipotence, change the earthly nature of the bread and wine into the substance of his body; since he says himself, *this is my body, this is my blood.*"*

When Berengarius began, about the year 1035, to preach his errors concerning the Eucharist, *Adelman*, formerly his fellow-disciple, wrote to him from Germany thus: "A rumor has been spread that you have separated yourself from the unity of the Church, and that you hold a doctrine contrary to the Catholic faith about the body of the Lord, which is every day immolated throughout all the world upon the holy altar."†

A still more celebrated adversary of Berengarius, *Lanfranc*, pressed him with this cogent argument, founded upon the same notorious fact just alluded to, and which the bold innovator himself did not venture to deny: "If *that* be true which you assert about the body of Christ, then must *that* be false which the Church every where believes and teaches on the same subject. For, all those who are and who glory in being Christians, glory likewise in receiving the true flesh and the true blood of Christ, both taken from the Virgin. Ask all those of the Latin tongue, ask the Greeks, the Armenians, in a word, the Christians of every nation; all unanimously testify that such is their belief. And now, if the belief of the universal Church be erroneous, either there never was a Catholic Church, or it has perished, since there is nothing more effectual in producing the ruin of souls, than a pernicious error. But to assert that the Church either never was or has perished, is anti-Catholic, anti-Christian, and a sacrilegious presumption. Therefore the error is on your side. Therefore, again, it is the

* Epist. ad. Adeodat. † Epist. ad Berengarium.

true flesh of Christ which we eat, and his true blood which we drink."*

The testimony of the Greek writers who lived during those ages, fully confirms what Lanfranc here asserts of the belief of oriental nations. Among the writings of *Theodorus Abucara*, metropolitan of the province of Caria, the following passage is found: "The priest lays on the holy table the bread and wine, and invokes the Holy Ghost; and the Holy Ghost comes down upon the things offered, and by the power of the Divinity, changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ."—We find likewise in *Euthymius*, a learned Basilian monk, these remarkable words on the twenty-sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew: "He (Christ) did not say, these are the signs of my body and blood; but, *this is my body*, *this is my blood*. . . . As he deified, as it were, the flesh which he had taken, so he changes these elements into his own vivifying body."

We might adduce a vast number of similar testimonies from other writers, whether Greek or Latin; *e. g.* Petrus Siculus, Theophilactus, Guitmundus, Algerus of Liege, Hugh of Langres, Durand of Troarn, etc.; also from the liturgies used as well during those ages, as before and after, the Roman, Ambrosian, Greek, Syriac, etc., all of which mention the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the transition or change of the eucharistic elements into his sacred body and blood: yet, we believe it quite unnecessary to carry our proofs any further, as no one, ever so little acquainted with ecclesiastical history, can deny that, when Berengarius towards the middle of the eleventh century

* De Corp. et Sang. Dom., c. 22, 23.

began to preach a different doctrine, the whole Church so unanimously rose against him, that there was not a single town engaged in his party, and that he himself was repeatedly compelled to abjure his errors.* From this time forward, the publicity of the belief of all Catholics throughout the world; the repeated condemnation of the Berengarian novelty; the decrees of the general Councils of Lateran, Constance, Florence and Trent, do not admit even of the slightest doubt, and, in addition to the preceding uninterrupted series of authorities from the ancient Fathers, Doctors and Councils, *they establish conclusively the fact*, that the doctrine of the real presence and transubstantiation has been, from the primitive ages and in accordance with the words of Christ and the preaching of the Apostles, constantly believed, professed and taught by the Catholic Church, exactly as it is at present.

* His most solemn recantation took place in a council held at Rome (A. D. 1079,) where he consented to make the following profession of faith, in presence of the Pope and of one hundred and fifty bishops: "I, Berengarius, believe from my heart and confess with my lips, that the bread and wine laid on the table are, through the mystery of the sacred prayer and the words of our Redeemer, changed into the true, real and vivifying flesh, and into the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that after the consecration, it is his true body, which was born of the Virgin, was offered on the cross for the redemption of mankind, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and the true blood of Jesus Christ, which flowed from his side. This I do believe, and I will teach nothing to the contrary; so help me God, and his holy Gospel." — Whether Berengarius was sincere in speaking thus, may be a matter of doubt; this at least is certain, that the formula proposed to him contained the plain doctrine of the Church, and that he was obliged to profess it, in order to be held orthodox.

CHAPTER II.

IMPOSSIBILITY OF A CHANGE HAVING TAKEN PLACE IN THE DOCTRINE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Let us now come to the second argument by which we promised to demonstrate the perpetuity of the Catholic faith on the Eucharist, viz., the impossibility of any change having ever taken place in the doctrine of the Church. In fact, since the dogma of the real presence and transubstantiation was firmly believed by all Christians in the middle of the eleventh century; since, on the other hand, our opponents assert, although quite contrary to historical truth, that this dogma was not known and believed before nor even during the ninth century: — a change in the doctrine of the Church, or, in other words, a transition of all Christians from the non-belief to the belief of the real presence and transubstantiation, must, in that system, have taken place in the interval which elapsed between the latter part of the ninth and the first part of the eleventh century; and this is really the period which Protestants commonly assign as the epoch of the pretended innovation. But, how many absurdities are implied in this admission, in whatever respect it may be considered!

I. Constant experience, history and the very nature of the human heart, concur in showing how difficult it is to induce even a limited number of persons to exchange the religious opinions in which they were educated, for doctrines opposed to them; especially when

the former are easy and in accordance with the senses or prejudices of men, while the latter, on the contrary, contain mysteries calculated alike to humble the pride of reason and to check the various passions of the heart. Much greater still is the difficulty, if such a change of belief is to be effected among a large portion of the people; and though the attempt may perhaps in some countries be really carried into execution, it is impossible, at least, that this should take place without a vast deal of remonstrance and opposition from the defenders of the ancient faith, particularly from those whose interest or bounden duty it is to arrest the progress of the innovation. This has always been the case, whenever a novelty in matters of religion was broached, and began to be spread among the faithful of any country. Without mentioning the long strifes formerly occasioned in the Church by the Arian, Pelagian, Donatist, Nestorian and Eutychian heresies; who is unacquainted with the innumerable and lasting disturbances which have been produced in later ages by the principles of the Protestant reformation, as well as the mighty opposition which they met with in their progress, although they were much less hostile to human passions than was the ancient belief which they attacked? And would it have been just the reverse with regard to the pretended innovation about the Eucharist? Would all Christians without exception and in a short time, have divested themselves of their natural and religious feelings, to admit a new doctrine, the most opposed to the senses and imagination that can be conceived? Would they have admitted it as a part of the divine revelation given by Christ to his Church, whilst (as necessarily follows

from the Protestant system,) it was to their own knowledge a mere novelty, and not a word had been heard of it before? In fine, would they have adopted it without difficulty, without trouble, without opposition and protestation, as must be supposed in this case, since nothing of the kind can be discovered to have taken place in those times; and whilst the author, the rise and the progress of every heresy, even on much less important points, have been carefully noticed in every age, here on the contrary, by a strange overthrow of the moral laws which govern mankind, both the fact and the circumstances of the supposed change of doctrine were immediately buried in perfect oblivion? What can be imagined more preposterous and incredible?

Indeed, if the belief of the Incarnation and other mysteries of the Christian faith, could not be spread and established throughout the world but by the incessant labors of the Apostles and of their successors in the ministry, by the innumerable miracles of those holy men, by the sufferings and death of millions of martyrs, by encountering during the space of three hundred years, the most violent and bloody persecutions, as is attested by all ancient monuments, whether sacred or profane; what reasonable man will ever admit that the dogma of transubstantiation and of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, which is not less opposed to human pride and prejudices than the other mysteries of religion, was preached for the first time *during*, and unanimously adopted within a short time *after* the ninth century, without the aid of miracles, without the testimony of martyrs, without any disturbance, without opposition or protestation; in

a word, so easily and quietly, that no mention, no vestige of such events can be found in any record?

II. The better to appreciate such a theory, let us consider more in particular the manner in which this pretended change of doctrine about the Eucharist is, by our adversaries, supposed to have happened. We do not think that any of them will ever assert that it was effected suddenly and every where at once; *e. g.* that both the pastors and the faithful, having one night fallen asleep with Protestant convictions, awoke the next morning with the unrestricted admission of the Catholic doctrine, without ever after remembering their former belief. This is so manifestly absurd, that no one enjoying the use of reason can be deemed capable of making an assertion of the kind. Hence the generality of Protestants have imagined another sort of innovation; one, slow in its progress, and daily advancing without being much noticed. They suppose, for instance, that Paschasius Radbertus, whom they generally call the originator of the doctrine of transubstantiation, at first communicated it to a few trusty friends; these, by their exertions, increased the number of its admirers; it began to spread far and wide; it afterwards divided the Christian world into two nearly equal portions, and at length became so prevalent every where, as to leave no remains, nor even any vestiges of the ancient faith.

This is truly a wonderful tale; but where are the evidences of its truth? Upon what foundation is it built? By what historical testimony or literary document is it supported? Whilst even frivolous objects and trifling events are daily recorded amongst men, how could it happen that a change of doctrine

about the Eucharist, a point so momentous and so intimately connected with the very vitals of Christianity, should not have produced a powerful impression on the public mind, and be carefully noticed by the contemporary writers? According to the fanciful story itself, the immediate and unavoidable effect of this progress of the pretended novelty would have been to split all the members of the Church into two very distinct parties, the one adopting the rising belief of the dogma of transubstantiation, and the other continuing to reject it for a certain time. This opposition of sentiments should have been found in every Christian country, in every religious order, in every congregation, in every town or village, and frequently among the inmates of the same dwelling. In the mean while, all would have acted up to their respective belief, some adoring the sacred body and blood of Christ as truly present in the Eucharist, and others viewing the doctrine and practice in no other light than that of a capital error and superstition. In such a state of things, would not dissensions, disputes and quarrels have arisen every where, and would it have been possible for the supposed novelty to be spread and established throughout the whole world without any sign or document being left of the innumerable disturbances which must necessarily have been the consequence?

III. And let it not be said that the tenth century having been a very dark age, in which ignorance every where prevailed, it was easy for an innovator to make the people adopt any notions that he might wish to intrude upon them: to assert this would be wrong in the extreme. In the first place, it does not account in the least for the monstrous phenomenon of a most

important change having occurred, without being noticed and mentioned by the writers of that age; a silence and neglect the more incomprehensible, as the eleventh century, which Protestants have no reason to laud more than the tenth, has left us innumerable monuments of the disturbances excited by the attacks of Berengarius against the dogma of transubstantiation, and of the opposition which his doctrine of the real absence every where met with; so far that, besides being refuted by a multitude of learned bishops and doctors, Lanfranc, Guitmond, Algerus, etc., it was condemned by no fewer than fifteen councils, held within the space of forty or fifty years in various parts of Christendom. Yet, it is self-evident that the task assumed by Berengarius was far easier, and more agreeable to man's limited reason and depraved senses, than would have been an attempt to introduce among the faithful the belief of transubstantiation, if it had been previously unknown among them. Much more, then, would this attempt have been opposed, and the whole history of so momentous a fact carefully noticed, to be transmitted with its various incidents to the latest posterity.

Again, we know that the words of Christ himself, "the bread which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world. . . . For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed;"* plain as they were, and supported by our Saviour's miracles and undeniable sanctity, found numerous gainsayers among his hearers, and even among his disciples, whom he therefore suffered to depart from him and to follow their own blind and rebellious reason.† What then would it have

* John vi. 52, 56. † Ibid. 53, 61, 67.

been, if a mere man, an impostor, had ventured to preach the same doctrine for the first time in the lapse of succeeding ages? Ignorance, however prevalent, would by no means have prevented a powerful opposition to that doctrine, had it been new in the Church. Ignorant persons are indeed more easily induced than others, to embrace those novelties which favor and gratify their cupidity, their sensuality, or their pride; and this is, in reality, what chiefly promoted the rapid growth of Protestantism in Germany and several other states of the north of Europe; but there are none more obstinate than persons of this description, in shutting their ears, their eyes and their hearts against any thing opposed to their prejudices, their customs and their disorderly passions. And now, what could be more effectual in opposing a check to all vicious habits or propensities, than the doctrine and belief of the substantial presence of Christ in the holy Eucharist, since its immediate consequence is the necessity of self-denial and great purity of conscience, to comply in a worthy manner with the divine precept of participating in the Eucharistic banquet, and of receiving within us the immaculate body and blood of our Blessed Redeemer?

Nay, — it might justly be said that, in many respects, no period of the Church was ever less adapted to a change in religious doctrine than the tenth century. For, never perhaps was there an age of stronger and more lively faith; none in which the feelings of men were more perfectly identified with religion. Religion, as we learn from the history of those times, was then readily preferred to all other things; the Christians of the middle ages entertained for it the same affection and devotion that the ancient Greeks and Romans so

often displayed for the defence of their liberty, and, to use the expressions of a great poet:

"On comprenait alors, mieux qu'au siècle où nous sommes,
Que l'intérêt des hommes,
Ne doit point balancer la querelle des cieux." *

How could it have been possible that men of this character, so firmly attached to the religious doctrines in which they had been raised, should have suffered them to be driven from their hearts and minds by a creed of new formation, and by opinions unknown to their fathers? If the heresies of Eutyches and Nestorius about the Incarnation of the Son of God met, at the very moment of their appearance, with such powerful opposition among the cold-hearted Greeks, what would have been, among the much more eager and zealous Christians of Western Europe, the fate of the bold innovator concerning the equally important point of the Eucharist?

IV. Moreover, the darkness and ignorance imputed to the tenth century, is far from having been as profound and universal as is commonly asserted. Whatever may be said by those who are interested in representing it as an age of barbarism, there was even then, a large number of celebrated schools, *v. g.* those of Worms, Oxford, Paris, Lyons, &c., where both sacred and profane letters were taught with success. There existed in that very age several Popes conspicuous for their learning and piety, such as Gregory V., Leo VII., Sylvester II., etc.; many illustrious and holy prelates, St. Brunon, archbishop of Cologne; St. Adalbert, bishop of Prague; St. Ulric, bishop of Augsburg; St. Odo and St. Dunstan, archbishops of Canterbury; —

* J. B. Rousseau, *Ode against the Turks.*

many scholars, if not distinguished for their literary refinement, at least remarkable for their sound judgment and their knowledge of the sacred sciences Ratherius, bishop of Verona; St. Notker, the monk of St. Gall; St. Odo, abbot of Cluny; Atto, bishop of Vercelli; Luitprand, bishop of Cremona; Flodoardus, canon of Rheims; — many pious kings and emperors, Alfonso the Great, and Ramirus II., in Spain; Edward, Athelstan, and Edgar, in England; St. Wenceslas, in Bohemia; Henry I. and Otto the Great, in Germany; — many zealous and learned missionaries, who successfully preached the Gospel among the several tribes of eastern and northern Europe, and to whose apostolic labors, the Sclavonians, the Poles, the Normans, the Danes, the Russians, the Hungarians, were indebted alike for their conversion to Christianity, and the solid beginnings of their civilization.

This having been the case in the tenth century, who can conceive the possibility of a new belief concerning the Eucharist having been introduced into the Church, without provoking a general outcry of indignation, remonstrance and opposition? Were the many virtuous and distinguished personages whom we have just mentioned, suddenly changed into beings of quite a different character; devoid of all reason, religion, and piety; so stupid as not to perceive the extraordinary and anti-Christian change of doctrine that was taking place all around them; so senseless as not to consider it sufficiently important to be resisted; so careless for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, so basely unfaithful to their duty in this twofold respect, as to connive first at the progress of the imposture, then gradually unite their own efforts with the exertions of its first propagators, and thus positive-

ly concur in promoting the success of the impious innovation? Wonderful indeed must be the credulity that can admit such a complete and universal shipwreck of rational and religious feeling.

V. This is not, however, the last nor the most perplexing difficulty to be found in the system which we are now discussing; its abettors have still to account for the origin of that unanimous belief in the real presence and transubstantiation, which we have already said and shall abundantly prove afterwards to exist as well among the schismatic Greeks, the Eutychians and the Nestorians, as among Catholics. During the tenth century, the Greek schism, which had been commenced under Photius in the century before, was awaiting but a pretext, and, as it were, a single spark to be revived and consummated; whilst the Nestorian and Eutychian parties, that had now been separated from both the Greeks and the Latins for five or six hundred years, persisted as sternly as ever in their opposition to the Church which had condemned their errors. Would all these have consented to receive from that Church the profane novelty of a dogma unknown to their fathers about the Eucharist? Would they not rather have rejected it with scorn, and gladly availed themselves of the favorable opportunity thus presented to them of lodging a just accusation against the Catholic body? But there is nowhere to be found even the shadow of an accusation of this kind; on the contrary, it was against the enemies of transubstantiation themselves that they launched all their anathemas, both when the Protestants of Germany solicited their alliance in 1574, and when the Huguenots of France accused them, about one hundred years later, of holding a doctrine different from that of Catholics in refer-

ence to the holy Eucharist. Let therefore our adversaries explain how and when these various oriental sects consented to adopt the pretended novelty which, in the Protestant system, was broached by the Latins during the *dark ages*. Let them tell from what source the dissenting Christians of Greece, Asia and Africa derived their belief of transubstantiation, and of the true, real and substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist, if not from the doctrine of the Apostles and the faith of that primitive Catholic Church of which they were once members.

VI. Such are the numerous contradictions and insuperable difficulties to be encountered in the admission of a doctrinal change having taken place in the Church on the nature of the holy Eucharist, whether during the tenth century, or *at any other period*. These last words we purposely add, and with very just reason; because the many arguments by which we have just proved that this change *did not* and *could not* have taken place in the tenth century, prove exactly the same and with equal strength for every other age.

In effect, the silence of all historians and writers concerning an innovation which, had it really happened, would have been so important to all, should not be deemed less incredible in reference to other periods of time, than in reference to the tenth century. Likewise, that universal oblivion of the ancient doctrine, which must be supposed to have pervaded the whole earth; that inconceivable medley of abettors and enemies of transubstantiation, all blended together and living in perfect harmony, so as never to break the bonds of unity and peace; that extinction of all rational and religious feelings, which a doctrinal change thus effected necessarily supposes: in a word, all the

essential circumstances which rendered this change impossible during the tenth century, rendered it equally impossible in every other epoch. Since, then, the impossibility of a religious innovation during the tenth century has been superabundantly proved, the same must be admitted to be equally proved for every other period.

The more so, as the results or consequences of a change of religious doctrine, are not arbitrary consequences; but they are moral effects, uniformly and invariably arising from passions and feelings common to all men. They cannot be denied, without ridiculously supposing that all men conspired in quietly giving up these natural feelings and passions, so as to act in this affair after a manner diametrically opposite to the course which they follow in all other affairs.

In order, then, to prove that a change of belief was utterly impossible at any period of Church history which our separated brethren may choose to assign; it is sufficient to lay down as an undeniable principle, that the men of all ages previous to us had the same nature and the same passions with ourselves. This is the only fact which we stand in need of, to form an invincible argument; and as this single fact is evident of itself, it carries along with it all the irresistible force of the intended demonstration.

It is certain, therefore, that the reasons which have been adduced to prove the impossibility of a change in the doctrine of the Catholic Church, are applicable to all periods of time whatever, and equally convincing for every age, past, present or future.

This may be illustrated by a comparison.

Whoever demonstrates in mathematics the qualities of a triangle, demonstrates them alike for all triangles,

whether actually existing or possible; because the evidences upon which he based his conclusion for one of them, equally belong to every other. The case is exactly the same, though the object is different, with regard to the impossibility of an innovation in the doctrine of the Catholic Church; our arguments to this effect being founded on the uniform and invariable order of moral laws inherent to our nature, will not be less convincing, whatever age may be substituted for the tenth century, and this newly assigned period, besides affording the same general proofs as above, will perhaps furnish us with some particular ones not less forcible than all the rest.*

Let us add to this, that the faith of the Church is, by the promises of Christ and the very nature of her constitution,† like one closely linked and unbroken chain. It is utterly impossible for novelties to find a place in it. Therefore, no such change ever happened, as our adversaries like so much and so liberally to suppose. Therefore, again, the doctrine of the real presence and transubstantiation, which was taught and believed throughout all Christendom, when Zuinglius, Luther and Calvin appeared, had been also the doctrine of all previous ages, ever since the beginning of Christianity; the doctrine of the Fathers and Apostles; the doctrine of Christ himself, transmitted to us, through an uninterrupted succession, with all those infallible marks of a sacred origin to which our reason should submit without the least hesitation, and whose paramount authority must destroy "every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and

* See *Perpètuitè de la foi*, vol. i. pp. 785—786.

† Matt. xviii. 20; Eph. iv. 11—16.

bring into captivity every understanding to the obedience of Christ."*

How frail, then, and how very insecure is the superstructure based on the theory of that imaginary change of doctrine about the Eucharist, which the leaders of Protestantism assert at all hazards to have once happened! How weak and groundless must be that cause, which finds itself obliged to rest upon such a support! This is, in fact, the only conclusion to which all the efforts made by the enemies of transubstantiation can lead the sincere inquirer. What can be said, when he sees them, in opposition to the overwhelming mass of authorities and arguments which prove, as plainly as can be desired, the Apostolical origin and the perpetuity of the Catholic faith, preferring the *obscure* expressions of an *obscure* writer of the ninth or tenth century; expressions, too, which have been repeatedly proved to be of no real service to their cause? What can be said of a course of this description, if not that it is the desperate effort of an agonizing system? And who is the person, in the least mindful of the future destiny of his immortal soul, and convinced of the necessity of the true faith for salvation, that will remain attached to such a system, or be willing to stake upon it his eternal welfare!

* 2 Corinth. x. 5.

PART II.

PROOFS OF THE REAL PRESENCE AND TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

From what has been said in the first part of this treatise, it is evident that the question about the holy Eucharist, is already decidedly settled in favor of Catholics; for, *that* must necessarily be true, which was always believed from the beginning by the Church of Christ, since she is "the pillar and ground of the truth,"* and the house of God built upon a rock, "against which the gates of hell shall not prevail."† However, as the object of this first part was rather to establish the *fact* of the perpetuity of the Catholic faith, than to deduce its consequences; and as, moreover, there is in support of the real presence and transubstantiation, a quantity of evidence which could not be properly introduced in the beginning of the controversy, we shall now produce it successively in four distinct chapters. The first will contain the proofs from Scripture; the second, those from Tradition; the third, those from the unanimous belief of all Christian societies upon earth, except the Protestants; in fine, the fourth and last chapter, after answering the objections usually brought against our doctrine on the

* 1 Tim. iii. 15. † Matt. xvi. 18.

Eucharist, will conclude with the words of the Council of Trent relative to this unspeakable blessing and mystery, which Christ has left to his Church to be perpetuated in it, through an uninterrupted succession of bishops and priests, till the end of the world.

CHAPTER I.

PROOFS FROM SCRIPTURE.

The holy Scripture affords us a three-fold evidence of the Catholic dogma concerning the Eucharist. We have, 1. the words of the promise, in St. John vi.; — 2. those of the institution, related by St. Matthew xxvi., St. Mark xiv., and St. Luke xxii.; — and 3. those of St. Paul relative to the reception of this great Sacrament, 1 Corinth. xi. Before, however, we enter upon this series of arguments, it will not be amiss to premise a few general remarks on the subject.

Of all the actions and discourses of our Lord, during the time "he was seen upon earth, and conversed with men," (Baruch iii. 38,) we find but few unanimously recorded by the four evangelists. His public life, his preaching and his miracles at large, his passion, his death and his resurrection; these are nearly all the facts that we read alike in the four gospels. His genealogy, his ascension, etc. are mentioned only in two of them; many other important events are recorded only by one, for instance, the Annunciation, by St. Luke; the flight into Egypt, together with the circumstances which preceded and followed it, by St. Matthew; the cure of the blind man of Bethsaïda, by St. Mark; the miracle of Cana in Galilee, the resurrection of Lazarus, and Christ's discourse to his

disciples after the last supper, by St. John. It was not, undoubtedly, without a just cause that the Holy Ghost so guided the pen of the sacred writers, as to cause certain words or actions of our Lord to be thus related, sometimes by one only, and sometimes by two or three of the Evangelists. With still greater reason may we believe that there was an especial and a strong motive for inducing them all to mention the same fact, particularly when this fact was not necessarily connected with the other parts of our Saviour's life and passion.

Let us apply this to the Holy Eucharist. Its institution is expressly recorded by St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke. St. John, according to his well known intent to omit in his Gospel many things sufficiently mentioned by the other Evangelists, and *vice versâ*, to mention many others not spoken of by them, does not describe the institution itself, but relates at full length the solemn promise which Christ had made, two years before, of that admirable and divine blessing. Nor is this all; St. Paul, who in his epistles, does not commonly refer in an historical manner to any part of our Saviour's life, makes an exception for the Eucharist, and relates the manner, the time and other circumstances in which it had been instituted, declaring at the same time that he had received the doctrine which he taught from our Lord himself; (see 1 Corinth. xi. 23 — 25.)

Now, what does this unanimity of the sacred writers give us to understand? Whilst several momentous events relating to Christ and to his religion, are found in no more than one or two places of the inspired writings; whilst many others, as St. John declares at the end of his his gospel, have not been written at all;

how has it happened that the Eucharist is recorded and described at full length in five or six different places of the New Testament? — This indeed is inexplicable in the system of Protestants, who do not admit the real and substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist; for surely, the weak and insignificant figures or symbols to which they confine their belief, were not worth the trouble of being so carefully described by the several inspired writers of the new law. But in the doctrine of Catholics and the belief of transubstantiation, the answer to the above question is perfectly obvious and satisfactory. It was worthy of God's wisdom, that the most dignified and most holy of all sacraments, one in which he gives, not only grace, but even himself to his creatures, should be frequently presented in Holy Writ to the pious recollection of the faithful. It was proper that a mystery which is so much above the dictates of our senses, a mystery to be daily renewed in the Church, and which Christ foresaw would be so violently attacked in the course of ages; should be repeatedly inculcated, not only by the unanimous voice of Tradition, but also by the inspired words of all the Evangelists. In fine, it was just that the words of our Saviour concerning this prodigy of his love, should be carefully recorded and found in many places of the New Testament, in order to leave no room for doubt or cavil about their literal meaning, and the better to strengthen the belief and excite the gratitude of the faithful throughout all ages.

SECTION I.

WORDS OF THE PROMISE.

These being premised by way of general illustration, let us see the particular proofs of the real presence and transubstantiation, which are afforded us by the holy Scripture. The first is taken from the words in which Christ, in accordance with his usual plan of foretelling the great mysteries which he intended afterwards to perform, predicted the institution of the Eucharist. This promise was made by him after the miracle of the multiplication of five loaves in the desert, and is thus recorded by the Apostle St. John, vi. 51 — 69:

"51. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven.

52. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world.

53. The Jews, therefore, debated among themselves, saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

54. Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen I say unto you: Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.

55. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

56. For my flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed.

57. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him.

58. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me.

59. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and died. He that eateth this bread, shall live for ever.

60. These things he said teaching in the synagogue, in Capharnaum.

61. Many, therefore, of his disciples hearing *it*, said: This saying is hard, and who can hear it?

62. But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples murmured at this, said to them: Doth this scandalize you?

63. If then you shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

64. It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life.

65. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and who he was that would betray him.

66. And he said: Therefore did I say to you, that no man can come to me, unless it be given him by my Father.

67. After this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

68. Then Jesus said to the twelve: Will you also go away?

69. And Simon Peter answered him: Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

Such is the testimony of the beloved disciple concerning this important part of the public life of our Saviour. How consoling it is for Catholics to behold

their divine Lord himself lay with such care the solid foundation of their belief, and express, as plainly and forcibly as human language can do, the reality of his presence in the sacrament which he then promised to institute, and which he afterwards did institute the night before his passion!

In the first place, his words, considered in themselves and according to their natural import, are clear and positive for the sense of the real presence. This was certainly the sense in which the Jews understood them from the beginning, since they asked: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" and this was undoubtedly also the meaning intended by our Lord, since, instead of diminishing the force of his former expressions, he rather increased it by the addition of an oath or an asseveration equivalent to it, saying: "*Amen, amen*, I say unto you: *Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.* He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. For *my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*" Can language be stronger and more explicit than these words of our Blessed Saviour, to signify his intention of giving us his own sacred body and blood for our sanctification, our comfort and our eternal happiness?

We must then acknowledge, that, if Christ had come upon earth not to instruct but to deceive, not to save but to seduce mankind, he could not have better succeeded than by thus repeatedly asserting, even with an oath, what, in this injurious supposition, he did not mean, viz. the reality of his presence in the Eucharist. The result, too, for those among his hearers who entertained the greatest respect for him with an

implicit reliance in whatever he said, must have been to throw them into an inevitable error about the true sense of his words. But what Christian can admit such a position and such a consequence? Would he not rather shudder to hear them attributed to the bountiful Saviour of mankind?

This will appear still more manifest, if we consider the circumstances which accompanied the discourse of our Lord at Capharnaum. 1°. He did not begin to speak of the Eucharistic mystery, until after he had performed the splendid miracle of the multiplication of loaves, and strongly inculcated the necessity of a steady faith in himself and in his words, particularly those relating to the heavenly food which he was about to promise them. "This is the work of God," he had said just before, "that you believe in him whom he hath sent. . . Amen, amen I say unto you: He that believeth in me, hath everlasting life I am the bread of life." (John vi. 29, 47, 48.) But why, we may ask, did Christ use so many precautions, if, in promising to give us his flesh to eat and his blood to drink, he meant nothing else than weak and insignificant symbols of his flesh and blood, namely some bread and some wine? Does it require a manifestation of the divine power, to institute bare memorials like these, or such a steady faith as we see here inculcated, to believe, as Protestants do, that these two material elements remain in the Eucharist what they were before? — 2°. Christ very positively declares that he places, and consequently that we also ought to place a much greater value upon the life-giving food which he here promises, than upon the manna that fed the Israelites in the desert; (John ib. 32, 33, 59.) But, in the doctrine of those who deny the real presence, it should

be just the reverse, because the manna was, after all, a food far superior to ordinary aliments, both in its origin and in its effects, being prepared by a special providence of God for his chosen people, and "having in it all that is delicious and the sweetness of every taste;" neither of which can be said of the Eucharist, if it contains nothing else but bread and wine without any change of their substance. — 3°. Since, not only the Jews of Capharnaum, but also many of the disciples were scandalized at hearing our Lord say that he would give his flesh to eat; in the supposition that they mistook his meaning, he ought certainly to have removed the fatal mistake to which the whole series of his discourse had naturally given rise; and since, on the other hand, he was incomparably zealous for the instruction and salvation of souls, he without doubt would have done it, by merely stating that he had spoken in figure and parable. But, instead of this, we see him upbraid them for their incredulity, increase their surprise by mentioning his future ascension into heaven as far as his visible presence is concerned, and suffer them to depart from him for ever. Nay, he showed a willingness to let his very Apostles go away, if *they* also would not believe, rather than change a single iota in the heavenly doctrine which he had just delivered. Can this be thought possible? Can it be reconciled with the ideas which we must entertain of our Blessed Redeemer, and would not such a conduct on his part be far more incomprehensible than the reality of his presence in the Eucharist?

And let it not be said, that he really did interpret his first expressions in a sense different from the Catholic interpretation, by adding: "It is the spirit that quick-

eneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life;" expressions which, to the adversaries of the real presence appear to signify that the whole of Christ's discourse must be spiritually understood, and that all idea of his flesh being present in the Sacrament, ought to be discarded. — It is truly wonderful indeed, that these modern interpreters are able to bring themselves to believe that our Lord fell into such a contradiction with himself as to demolish his own work, and that by these words he intended to deny what he had just before so emphatically asserted. But still more wonderful, if they seriously attempt to prove that he did so, and whilst they themselves admit his sacred body to have been the precious victim of our redemption on the cross, would have us to consider it as "profiting nothing."

This, therefore, cannot have been the meaning of Christ. In the passage just quoted, he does not say: "*My flesh* profiteth nothing;" having on the contrary declared it to be a life-giving flesh, "He that eateth *my flesh*, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life. . . . For *my flesh* is meat indeed:" but the flesh of which he says that it "profiteth nothing" is *flesh* in general, dead and common flesh, such as probably the Jews had imagined he would give them to eat, such as is sold in markets and prepared by cooks to be served on our tables. Nay, our Saviour does not seem here to speak of human flesh at all, but of the perverted reason and carnal apprehension of worldlings, which prevent them from submitting to the word of God and to the impulse of his grace. In effect, it is to be remarked that, when the word *flesh* is used in the Scripture in opposition to the word *spirit*, it does not signify the substance of the flesh, but the sinners' carnal

and sensual way of thinking or acting, as in the following instances: "*My spirit* shall not remain in man for ever, because he is *flesh;*" (Gen. vi. 3.) "We walk not according to *the flesh*, but according to *the spirit;*" (Rom. viii. 4.) When therefore Christ said: "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing," he did not mean his sacred flesh, nor even human flesh at all, but the carnal apprehension of most of his hearers, who presumed to reject a divine truth because it did not agree with their own notions; whereas they ought to have believed it upon his formal asseveration, so well calculated and so sufficient by itself to give light, understanding and salutary persuasion to their souls. This was in reality confirming what he had said before; and hence the Jews, seeing that the literal meaning of his promise to give his flesh to eat, continued to be enforced, they also continued to be scandalized at it, so that from this time "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

As to the twelve Apostles, more steady in their faith and more constant in their submission to the words and authority of Christ, they followed in his regard a very different course. Being asked by him whether they also would go away, they contented themselves with answering by the mouth of St. Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life;" thus deserving, by this courageous perseverance in their belief, to obtain the grace of persevering also in his blessed company.

The same exactly which happened 1800 years ago near Capharnaum, takes place at the present day in the controversy between Catholics and Protestants about the holy Eucharist. We hear the latter con-

tinually say: "*How* can a body be present at the same time in heaven, upon earth and in many places at once? *How* can it be contained in so small a space as a host or even a particle? *How* can bread be substantially converted into flesh, and wine into blood, without any change in the the outward form; and *how* can the accidents or appearances of both the bread and wine subsist without their natural subjects?" Is not this the fatal *how* once pronounced by the Jews of Capharnaum and by those unfaithful disciples whom our Lord suffered to depart from him, when they said: "*How* can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Do not Catholics on the contrary, imitate the example of the Apostles, by despising all these pretended difficulties, which indeed are nothing for Divine Omnipotence, and by giving full credit to him who "has the words of eternal life," when he tells them, "the bread which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world. . . . . For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed?" — Let every one now judge which of these parties is preferable, which of the two is exclusively worthy of a sincere follower of the doctrines of revelation, and of a true disciple of Christ.

SECTION II.

WORDS OF THE INSTITUTION.

The words and manner which our Saviour employed when he instituted the holy Eucharist, furnish us, if possible, with a still more powerful and more overwhelming proof of the real presence and transubstantiation. They are thus related in the Gospel of St.

Matthew: "Whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to his disciples; and said: Take ye and eat: This is my body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks; and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this: For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins."* From these words, and a few others recorded by St. Luke as having been spoken by Christ on the same occasion, viz. "Do this for a commemoration of me;" we draw the following plain argument.

It is evident, and will be easily admitted by all, that the expressions just cited, THIS IS MY BODY — THIS IS MY BLOOD, etc., prove the real and substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist, if they are to be understood, not in a figurative and metaphorical sense, as Protestants assert, but, as Catholics maintain, in their proper, natural and obvious meaning. Now, that they are to be understood in this *proper, natural and obvious meaning*, is equally evident from a variety of forcible considerations, out of which we select and shall propound six, in the following order:

I. The object which our Blessed Saviour had in view in the institution of the holy Eucharist.

II. The circumstances in which he instituted it.

III. The principles of criticism universally admitted in the interpretation of Scripture.

IV. The most unequivocal and necessary rules of language.

V. The context and the whole tenor of the words themselves.

* Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, 28; — See also Mark xiv. 22 — 24; — Luke xxii. 19, 20; — St. Paul, 1 Corinth. xi. 23 — 25.

VI. The unanimous consent of the Fathers and the tradition of the whole Church from the earliest days of her existence.

Any one of these considerations should be deemed sufficient to settle the point now before us; how much more so their collective strength and the immense weight accruing from their re-union! — Let us come to particulars.

I. The object which our Blessed Saviour had in view in the institution of the holy Eucharist, proves that his words must be taken, not in a figurative and metaphorical sense, but in their proper, natural and obvious meaning. This object was to propose *a new article* of belief and establish *a Sacrament*, as Protestants themselves admit; to enact *a law*, as we learn from St. Luke, (xxii. 19;) and to make his *testament* or last will, as all the Evangelists testify. But, all these things required to be expressed in plain words — words taken in their obvious and proper signification, without figures or metaphors. In effect, since *dogmas* are revealed for no other end than that they should be believed, the terms in which they are expressed must be simple and unambiguous, lest they should become an occasion of error for the sincere Christian himself; — this should especially be the case in the opinion of Protestants, who admit no other deposit of revelation and no other rule of faith than the Bible. *Sacraments* being likewise intended for the general use and advantage of the faithful, must contain nothing in the expressions and manner in which they were established, that might cause them to degenerate easily into useless or superstitious practices. Hence all the Sacraments, both of the old and of the new law, were really instituted and announced in the plainest and most une-

quivocal language. *Laws* also must be expressed without metaphors, and, if possible, without the least shadow of ambiguity, not to give any just cause to those cavils and ill-interpretations which men are so apt to put even upon the wisest and best enactments. Hence all wise and prudent legislators, have ever taken the greatest care to deliver their injunctions to the people in the plainest and most natural style. But of all transactions of importance, a *testament* or last will is the one from which figurative and obscure expressions ought to be most carefully removed, and in which not even the slightest pretence for dispute and misunderstanding, should be given. Civilians agree that the expressions in which a deed of this nature is couched, must be taken according to the letter. What would a Protestant say, if, instead of a house or an estate which has been positively bequeathed to him by a dying friend or parent, he were only to receive a picture representing the house or the estate? Would he not complain of the injustice, and loudly protest against the illegality of such a proceeding? The application of this to our present subject is most natural.

We read in the Gospel the plain and formal expressions, by which Christ our Lord, the author of the *new and everlasting testament*, gave us his sacred body and blood for our comfort and supersubstantial nourishment; and behold, after the lapse of many centuries, Calvin, Zuinglius and their successors come forward, telling us that our Saviour intended to give us in the Eucharist nothing more than bread and wine, as symbols of his body and blood! What is this, but to attribute to the Son of God an unworthy and base equivocation; one which we can hardly conceive even sinful man capable of, especially when preparing for

the awful hour of death? What means, then, is left to remove so injurious a supposition? None, except to believe, as Catholics do, that our Saviour really intended to give what he expressly said he gave us by his last will, namely, his body and blood.

II. This is also proved from the various circumstances of action, time and persons in which Christ was placed, when he instituted the holy Eucharist. It was after the eating of the passover, one of the most striking and ancient figures of his own sacrifice; it was the evening before his death, a few moments before the beginning of his passion, and consequently such a time as would induce him to speak as clearly as possible, without figure and ambiguity; it was to his beloved Apostles that he spoke, to those faithful disciples whom he called his children and friends, from whom he kept nothing secret, to whom, according to his own expression, it was granted "to know the mystery of the kingdom of God;" (Luke viii. 10;) to whom he had previously announced that he would give his flesh to eat and his blood to drink, and who were now prepared to receive without surprise, for the first time, the accomplishment of his promise. Is it possible that, under these circumstances, Christ would have spoken in figurative terms of the great mystery which he was instituting; that he would have expressly mentioned the giving of his body and blood, if he meant nothing else but the figure of both; that he would have thus deceived his Apostles, whose docile and illiterate minds were certainly unable to conceive a meaning so contrary to the obvious and proper signification of his words; a meaning so abstruse, that it remained totally unknown and unheard of in the Church for a long series of ages; a meaning so unnatural, that Zuinglius

did not discover it until after four years of perplexing labors, and even then did not dare openly to propose it, before he was encouraged in his design by the apparition of a spirit, whether black or white, he could not tell;* whilst, on the other hand, Luther, however willing, never could prevail upon himself to admit such a rash metaphorical sense, seeing it contrary to the plain letter of our Saviour's expressions.† Let us ask once more; is it possible that this rash meaning, so unworthy at all times of the goodness and veracity of Christ, should have been intended by him for his faithful and beloved disciples, in his last discourse to them, and on so solemn an occasion as the eve of his death? Would not this be a far greater mystery than the real presence itself?

III. Our next proof is taken from the rules of criticism universally admitted in the interpretation of Scripture; rules without which we would be exposed to a thousand errors and illusions about its true meaning, and which are followed, most of them, by Protestants themselves, when they have to argue against Universalists, Anabaptists, or Unitarians. As some of those rules will come afterwards under particular heads, for instance, in Nos. 5 and 6 of this very section, we will here content ourselves with the celebrated principle laid down by St. Augustine in his third book *De Doctrinâ Christianâ*, and embraced unanimously by doctors, interpreters and divines; namely, that the words of Holy Writ must always be taken *in their proper and obvious signification*, unless other and clearer texts of Scripture, or some evident and incontestable reason require a different meaning; otherwise,

* Libr. *De subsidio Eucharist.* † *Epist. ad Argentinenses.*

there would be nothing certain in the Bible, a consequence which surely our adversaries never will admit. Now, do any passages of the sacred volume contradict the obvious meaning of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist, which results from the words of the institution? Far from it, we have on the contrary seen the very same truth clearly expressed in the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John; nay, it is impossible for an attentive reader not to perceive the strict analogy and connection between both places, Christ saying in the one: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you," (John vi. 54;) and in the other: "Take ye and eat: This is my body. — Drink ye all of this: For this is my blood."* The same is likewise strongly inculcated by St. Paul in various places, for instance in these words: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we break, is it not the

*We must here observe, with regard to the Communion under both kinds, that the latter words were spoken to the twelve Apostles, who were the *all* then present; *and they all drank of it*, says *St. Mark*, xiv. 23. But it by no means follows from these words spoken to the Apostles, that all the faithful are also commanded to drink of the chalice; any more than that all the faithful are commanded to consecrate, offer, and administer this sacrament, because Christ upon this same occasion and at the same time, bid the Apostles to do so, in these words: "Do this in commemoration of me," (Luke xxii. 19.) It is indeed necessary, for the sacrifice, that priests should consecrate and receive the body and blood of our Saviour *under both kinds*, but the same is not necessary for the integrity of the Sacrament, since Christ, being no longer liable to sufferings and death, is contained whole and entire under each of the two species, as he himself says: "He that *eateth me*, the same also shall live by me;" (John vi. 58.) — See Council of Trent, Sess. xxi. ch. 1 — 3.

partaking of the body of the Lord?" (1 Corinth. x. 16.) Whence it is manifest that the different parts of the New Testament, instead of contradicting or weakening, serve wonderfully to confirm the plain and obvious meaning of the real presence expressed in the words of the institution.

We read, it is true, in the same sacred volume these other texts which our adversaries triumphantly object: "If any man shall say to you: Lo, here is Christ; or, Lo, he is there: do not believe. — The poor you have always with you: but me you have not always. — Again I leave the world, and I go to the Father. — And the Lord Jesus . . . was taken up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God." — But, who does not perceive at once that these several passages mean the natural mode of existing and the visible presence of Christ; whilst his presence in the Eucharistic mystery, which his own words oblige us to admit, although perfectly true and real, is supernatural and invisible; consequently there is no contradiction whatever between them; since contradiction consists in asserting and denying the same thing of the same object considered in the same light; which is not the case here. "For" as the Council of Trent says, "there is no repugnance in these things, that Christ, according to his natural manner of existence, should always remain in heaven at the right hand of his Father; and that at the same time he should be sacramentally, though substantially present with us in many places.* Since therefore the Scripture teaches us both these truths, both must be equally and unhesitatingly admitted.

* Conc. Trid. Sess. xiii. c. 1.

Nor is there any thing in the Eucharistic mystery, any more than in the other mysteries of religion, repugnant or perplexing to the mind of the sincere Christian. Every thing in it, on the contrary, is worthy of the greatness and munificence of God, and of the designs of his mercy for the sanctification of men; every thing in it proclaims, in the most wonderful manner, the omnipotence, the infinite wisdom, and the unspeakable goodness and condescension of our Lord towards us: 1. his omnipotence, which thus renders the existence of corporeal elements subordinate and subservient to the preternatural order of religion, by changing, at the voice of priests commissioned by himself, the whole substance of the bread and wine laid on the altar into the substance of his precious body and blood. — 2. his infinite wisdom, which has devised this admirable means of reconciling two apparently opposite desires, the one, of returning to his Father's bosom; and the other, of really and substantially remaining with us till the end of ages, to be our support, our comfort, our viaticum; as he himself declares in other places that "his delights are to be with the children of men;" that "he will not leave us orphans, but come to us, and make an abode with us." * — 3. We have above all to admire in this most holy Sacrament, that unspeakable goodness, which induces him thus to communicate himself entirely to the souls of his servants, and that too, in the most amiable and condescending manner, namely, under the appearance of an ordinary food, in order to remove the repugnance and excessive awe which might have otherwise prevented us from receiving him in his visible

* Prov. viii. 31. — John xiv. 18, 23.

form and in the splendor of his majesty. — With regard to ourselves, the holy Eucharist is productive of the most beneficial and salutary effects. Whilst we are, on the one hand, commanded to partake of this mystery from time to time at communion, we are, on the other, forbidden to approach it without great purity of conscience, that is to say, without an entire disengagement from at least every mortal sin, and a sincere determination to observe all the commandments. Hence, the dogma of transubstantiation, far from having any immoral tendency, as its opponents sometimes have not blushed to assert, produces effects entirely the reverse, and is the very best means to enforce morality, to subdue vicious inclinations, to maintain purity of soul and body, and to excite gratitude and love for our Blessed Redeemer. Nothing likewise can be more efficacious to console and support us amidst the many afflictions which assail us in this vale of tears, than to know and be assured by divine revelation, that we possess amongst us, really and substantially, though under the sacramental veil, the same Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who is the eternal felicity of the saints; a thought the best calculated to induce us to "go from virtue to virtue," until we also enjoy his blessed sight and the full manifestation of his glory in the heavenly Jerusalem.* Not only then is it true, that there exists no reason for departing from the obvious and natural meaning of our Saviour's words at the last supper; it is moreover certain, that, whatever may be the view in which we choose to consider the Eucharistic mystery, every thing in it tends to prove

* Psalm. lxxxiii. 8.

more and more the necessity of that literal sense which all Catholics admit.

IV. This will equally appear from the application of the rules of human language to the words of the institution. One of these rules requires that, in the use of metaphors, the expressions which are to be taken metaphorically, should at the same time remain vague and indeterminate in themselves, and yet show in their general meaning a certain analogy and connexion with the qualities of the object to which they are applied. Thus our Lord said of himself with great propriety: I am the door;" that is to say, like to a door through which all must enter, who wish to be saved, as he himself explained it, (John x. 9.) Again: "I am the true vine; and my Father is the husbandman. . . I am the vine; you the branches:" (John xv. 1, 5.) That is to say again, according to his own explanation, (ib. 4, 6, 8:) I am as the vine from which the branches derive the sap whereby they are nourished, you are like those branches of the vine which derive their life from it, and my Father is like the husbandman who takes an assiduous care of them, to make them bear much fruit. All this is perfectly reasonable, and adapted to every capacity. It is in the same sense, and with the same turn of indeterminate expressions implying nothing more than a comparison and resemblance, that our Lord is called in the Scripture, "a lion," and "a rock," on account of his power and strength; "a lamb," on account of his meekness; and "a corner stone," on account of his being the founder of the Church, composed of converted Jews and Gentiles, etc. But no where is he called *this* or *that* lion in particular, *this* lamb, *this* corner stone; nor did he ever say of himself, I am *this* door, I am *this* vine, and my

Father is *this* husbandman: which expressions, by excluding the comparison and metaphor, would have changed totally his meaning. Now these determinate expressions and demonstrative pronouns which exclude all metaphor and point out the object itself, were precisely those which Christ repeatedly made use of in the institution of the Eucharist. "*This* is my body, *this* is my blood." Hence we cannot but wonder at the ingenuity of our separated brethren, when in sentences so essentially different as these, not only in the matter spoken of, but also in the mode of phraseology: "I am *the* door," "*this* is my body;" — "I am *the* vine," "*this* is my blood," and the like; they equally find a symbolical and metaphorical meaning.

There is another important rule of human language, with regard to the use of figurative expressions. This rule allows, when an object, either from its own nature or from universal custom and implicit agreement among men, represents and signifies another object, to give to the former the name of the latter; in other words, to give to the sign the name of the thing signified: but it absolutely forbids it in other cases, unless the writer or speaker expressly declares that he intends to make use of such or such other terms in a figurative sense. Thus, at the sight of clouds of rising smoke, one may justly say; "Here is, or this is fire;" because smoke is a very natural sign of the presence of fire. Thus also, in pointing out at a picture or statue of Washington or Napoleon, we may say with propriety; "This is Washington, this is Napoleon;" because it is a universal custom among men, to designate a picture or statue by the name of the person whom it represents. Likewise, in the interpretation of supernatural dreams, typical rites, allegorical visions, the visible

object of any such dream, vision and rite, properly receives the name of the object which it is intended to signify, as in Gen. xli. 26; — Exod. xii. 11; — Dan. ii. 38; — Ezech. xxxvii. 11; — 1 Corinth. x. 4, 6; because the intention of both the person who inquires after its import, and of the person who interprets it to others is precisely, for the one, to learn, and for the other, to declare what it signifies: Nor is there, under such circumstances, any danger of error and misapprehension, since the meaning of words on both sides is agreed upon and perfectly understood before hand. But, it would be certainly ridiculous in the extreme, to exclaim, for instance at the sight of a tree, "This is Alexander the Great;" if the speaker had not previously made known his intention of designating Alexander the Great after this manner; because a tree neither by its nature, nor by common agreement of men, designates Alexander or any other prince, and there is no body in the world, unless duly and previously admonished, that could understand such language. But, such is the case exactly with the subject now under consideration. Bread never signified the body of Christ, nor indeed of any other person, either of itself or by common usage. Consequently, when Christ, having taken bread and blessed it, said: "This is my body;" if he meant not his real body now rendered present by transubstantiation under the appearance of bread, but, as Protestants assert, a mere sign or symbol of his sacred humanity, his expressions are the most unintelligible that can possibly be imagined. And it cannot be said that he explained them to the Apostles in a figurative sense; since not the least vestige of this pretended explanation is to be found in any part of Scripture or Tradition. The direct consequence,

then, of the Protestant system is, that Christ violated all the rules of language, and spoke in order to be misunderstood; nor is there any way left to escape from this labyrinth of errors, except to adopt the Catholic interpretation.

Let us hear, on this subject, a man whose controversial ability is admitted on all sides. "If the Son of God," says Bossuet, "were so careful, as he was, to explain to his Apostles whatever he had taught them under the forms of parables and figures; is it not manifest that, since to the foregoing words (*This is my body*) he affixed no explanation whatsoever, it was consequently his intention that mankind should understand them in their plain and obvious import? It is true, Protestants pretend that the thing explains itself; because it is notorious, they say, that what Christ thus presents, appears only to be bread and wine. — Preposterous and feeble reasoning! For, is not He who speaks, possessed of a degree of authority which is more than paramount to that of the senses, and superior even to all the powers of nature? There is not any greater difficulty for the Son of God to give his body to us in the Eucharist, by simply saying, "this is my body," than there was to cure the sick woman, by saying to her; "Woman, thou art delivered from thy infirmity;" (Luke xiii. 12;) — than there was to preserve the life of the young man, by saying to his father; "Thy son liveth;" (John iv. 50;) — than there was in fine to remit the sins of the paralytic, by merely telling him, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" (Matt. ix. 2.)

"Without, therefore, perplexing ourselves about the means by which the divine power of Jesus executes what he announces, — what we should do, is thus

respectfully to attach ourselves to his words. That Being, who does whatsoever he pleases, by his word *also* performs whatsoever he speaks. It is far less difficult for the Son of God to bend the laws of nature to obey his word, than it is for us to reconcile our reason to those singular interpretations, which infringe by their violence all the established rules of language.

"By these rules we are instructed, that the sign which represents any object *naturally*, receives, not unfrequently, the appellation of such an object: because it recalls its idea naturally to the imagination. The same observation, although with certain restrictions, may be made in relation to signs of *institution*, when these are generally received, and by habit, become familiar. But, to establish a sign which, of its own nature, bears no reference or analogy to its object, for example, a bit of bread to signify a human body; or else, to give it a certain name, without giving at the same time any explanation of its meaning, and before any one, much less the public, has agreed on its acceptation, (and this is what Christ did on the occasion of his last supper;) to do this, is a thing that is quite unheard of; a thing of which, neither the whole series of the Sacred Scriptures, nor any instance in human language, supplies one single example."*

V. But, not only the rules of criticism to be followed in the interpretation of Scripture, and the established laws of human language, concur alike in proving, by their application to the words used by Christ at the last supper, the dogma of his real presence in the Eucharist; the very tenor and the whole context of his

* Bossuet's Exposition of the Doctrines of the Catholic Church, translated by Fletcher, pp. 156 — 158.

discourse, the plainness and energy of his expressions, even considering them in the fundamental principle of Protestants, unavoidably lead us to the same conclusion.

No one who calls himself a Christian, will deny that Christ could, if he would, change bread into his body, and wine into his blood. To him "All power is given in heaven and in earth," (Matt. xxviii. 18;) to him "The Father had given all things into his hands," (John xiii. 3;) he had, not long before, changed water into wine in Cana of Galilee, and he had formerly created the whole world out of nothing. Since, therefore, it is certain that he had *the power*, we must admit that he had *the will* also, and that he really did effect and establish the miraculous change which Catholics admit in the Eucharistic mystery; for, he made use of the plainest and strongest words possible to signify that what he gives us, is no longer the substance of bread and wine, but the substance of his own body and blood. — We shall now develope this idea more fully, first with regard to the *real presence* alone; and then with regard to *transubstantiation* also, in as much as it means the *change* of the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ.

First, the real presence of the body and blood of our Lord in this mystery, is very solidly and very satisfactorily established by the words *themselves* employed in its institution, THIS IS MY BODY, THIS IS MY BLOOD. "These words we interpret literally; neither ought we to be any more questioned why we thus attach ourselves to their obvious and natural signification, than the traveller should be asked, why he keeps the high road?"* We are even more forcibly inclined to do

* Bossuet, ibid. 152.

this, when we consider that all the other words spoken by our Divine Saviour on the same occasion, inculcate the same meaning. For, he had also said, just after the eating of the passover and immediately before mentioning his own sacred body: "Take ye and eat;" adding then: "This is my body which shall be delivered for you;" (1 Corinth. xi. 24.) This shows that, in the same manner precisely as the ancient Jews were commanded to eat of the pacific victim which was offered for them, as a mark of the share which they had taken in its oblation; just so, Christ Jesus, being himself our true pacific victim, has ordained that, in the Eucharist, the Christian also shall eat effectually of the flesh of the holy sacrifice; in order that the actual communication of this adorable aliment may be to us a perpetual memorial, that it was for our sakes that he took flesh, and for our salvation, that he was pleased to immolate it.

Next come the words recorded by St. Luke, (xxii. 19,) and St. Paul, (1 Corinth. xi. 24,) which show that this Eucharistic Sacrament and Sacrifice is to be continued in the Church to the end of the world: "Do this for a commemoration of me," or, as St. Paul explains it; in order to "show forth the death of the Lord, until he come:" (ibid. 26.) Is it credible that Christ, wishing to institute a memorial of his passion and death, should have left us nothing better than a piece of bread and some wine? At this rate, the Jews were much more favored than we are, since they possessed in the lamb which they daily immolated, and chiefly in the paschal lamb, a much more striking, appropriate and dignified figure of the body and blood of our Saviour as immolated for us on the cross, than bread and wine can and will ever be. It is not, then, such

an empty memorial of his sufferings as this, that Christ instituted at the last supper, but his own body and blood under the appearances of bread and wine. In fact, he did not commission his Apostles and their successors to make a remembrance of him by merely taking and distributing a corporeal food, but by doing what he himself had just done in their presence, DO THIS; viz. by consecrating and distributing his body and blood under the outward form of material elements. To offer therefore in Sacrifice, and receive in the Sacrament, that very Humanity of our divine Lord which was once the bloody victim of our redemption, is the only manner of commemorating and celebrating his death that we ought to admit.

We must also carefully notice these other words of our Saviour: "My body, *which is given for you.* . . My blood, *which shall be shed for you;*" (Luke xxii. 19, 20.) It was surely the true and real body of Christ which was immolated for us, and his true and real blood which was shed for our salvation. Consequently, it is also his real body and blood which he gives us in the Eucharist.

This conclusion, our dissenting brethren themselves are obliged to admit, if they wish to be consistent, and to follow up their fundamental rule of faith, which is to believe what is clearly contained in the Bible, and nothing else. For, we have it clearly contained in the Bible, that Christ said: "This is my body — This is my blood;" whereas we do not find any where that he said: This is the figure of my body — This is the figure of my blood.

In our opinion, the very simple remark which we here present to the reader, should be deemed sufficient to make all sincere Protestants perceive the capital

error in which the so-called reformation has involved them on the subject of the Eucharist. Christ our Lord expressly asserted what the Catholics believe, and he did not so much as insinuate what their adversaries maintain; this alone should be enough for every candid mind, to settle the controversy for ever. Hence, the learned and holy doctors of the Church in ancient times, the Irenæuses, the Cyrils, the Chrysostoms, the Hilaries, frequently contented themselves with relating the words of Christ, in order to excite the faithful more and more to a firm belief of the real presence and transubstantiation.* Hence did it happen, too, that Luther never could, notwithstanding his earnest desire and efforts, prevail upon himself to reject the dogma of the real presence, as he himself testified in his letter to the inhabitants of Strasburg: "I wish," said he, "some one could persuade me that there is nothing in the Eucharist, except bread and wine; such a one would do me a great service. For, I clearly saw how much I should thereby injure popery; but I find myself caught, without any way of escaping: the text of the Gospel is too explicit."† He continued in this belief till his death, and not only refused to have any communication with those Protestants who denied the true and real presence, but moreover, he hurled against them sometimes the shafts of his coarse ridicule, and sometimes the thunder of his vehement declamation and anathemas.

It is true, that this *Great Reformer*, wishing to deny as much as he could of the Catholic dogma, banished *transubstantiation* from his creed, and maintained that

* See their several passages above, pp. 17 — 19, and also hereafter, ch. II.

† Epist. ad Argentinenses.

the substance of the bread and wine remained in the Eucharist, together with the substance of the body and blood of Christ; a novel theory which was designated by the name of *consubstantiation*. But, it was as easy a task for Catholics to refute him on this point, as it had been for him to overthrow the doctrine of his opponents about the real presence. For, as we have argued hitherto against the Protestant system at large, since our Lord said, "this is my body, this is my blood;" he must have given the real substance of his body and blood, otherwise he would not have spoken the truth; and moreover, there could have been no other substance with that body and blood, otherwise he would not have spoken according to the rules of language. The word "*this*" expresses in its obvious and proper acceptation, the entire substance of the thing present; but if the substance of the bread and wine had remained, the pronoun *this* would by no means have expressed it, since it is applied by Christ *only* to his body and blood. Again; our Saviour's words, according to the ordinary rules of speech, convey no other idea than that the substance of his sacred body and blood is the only substance present. But what material did he employ for the Eucharistic consecration? Was it not bread and wine? Consequently, there must have been a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of the blood of Christ. This is what we call *transubstantiation*; and thus does it remain certain that the words used in the institution of the Eucharist imply the dogma of transubstantiation as necessarily as they do the real presence.

This may be confirmed from the controversy which arose on this point among the first reformers. Whilst

Luther endeavored to obtain credit for his new doctrine of consubstantiation, the leaders of the other Protestant parties, Zuinglius, Calvin, etc., denounced it as erroneous, called it inconsistent, and showed that the real presence cannot be admitted without admitting at the same time a change of substance. For, Christ, they observed, did not say, "here is my body, or my body is with this and under this;" nor, "this contains my body;" but simply, "this is my body:" teaching us thereby, that what he gives to his children, is not a substance which contains his body or accompanies it, but his body itself without any other substance. Nor did he say, "*this bread* is my body," but, "*this* is my body," to show that the substance which he gives is no longer bread, but his body. These arguments in favor of transubstantiation were certainly conclusive, and as unanswerable as those made by Luther himself in favor of the real presence. And thus it was, in the great contest carried on among the Protestant parties, that the Catholic Church alone was victorious, as this conduct of her enemies plainly attested.*

VI. The last proof which we have promised in support of the Catholic interpretation of our Saviour's words, is the unanimous consent of the Fathers and the whole tradition of the Church from the earliest days of her existence. All our ancestors in the faith ever since the dawn of Christianity, have grounded chiefly upon these words their belief of the real presence and transubstantiation, as we have shown before and will again show afterwards. Here, then, may we also rest in perfect security as to the truth and certainty of our doctrine. Who could believe, if he reflected but a

* See Bossuet's History of Variations, b. ii. ch. 30—37.

few moments, that our Lord kept the Church which he himself has founded, during fifteen hundred years in darkness about the real meaning of his expressions, and reserved the true understanding of them to the innovators of the sixteenth century? Who would not like infinitely better to appear at the judgment-seat of Christ in the company of those illustrious saints, Ignatius, Irenæus, Justin, Hilary, Chrysostom, Basil, Augustine, Ambrose, Gregory, etc. etc., than by the side of such men as Carlostadius, Zuinglius, Luther and Calvin? In fine, what person ever so little anxious about his eternal salvation, will not, in so momentous a point, prefer the unanimous assent and judgment of all those holy doctors, of those brilliant ornaments and lights of the Church, of the whole Church herself, "the pillar and ground of the truth," (1 Timoth. iii. 15;) to that of the unauthorized individuals who, excited by disappointed pride or by still more degrading passions, dared to attack this unanimous belief of all preceding ages?

Let us conclude this part of our subject by a general consideration, taken from the foreknowledge of Christ. When he instituted the holy Eucharist, he foresaw perfectly well that the terms which he employed on this occasion, would be understood in their literal sense by all the Fathers, all the holy Doctors, all the Saints, in a word, by all Christians for fifteen hundred years, and then, during the following generations, by a vast majority of them throughout the world. He knew also that the circumstances in which he spoke, the principles of criticism and the rules of language, would all convey the meaning of transubstantiation and of his true, real and substantial presence in the Eucharist. In fine, by altering his expressions or by

abstaining from speaking at all on the subject, he could have most easily removed and discarded that meaning; and yet, he did and said what was the best calculated to force it irresistibly upon the mind. What must be concluded from this? Nothing else than that, if the belief of Catholics be error, superstition and idolatry, as Protestants have so often called it, it is to Christ himself that the establishment of error, superstition and idolatry should be chiefly attributed; "Domine, si error est, à te decepti sumus," must we say with the celebrated Richard of St. Victor. If our separated brethren think proper to continue in the admission of this odious consequence, we shall not envy their fate, but lament their misfortune. As to ourselves, we would rather doubt our own existence, than believe for a single instant that the Divine Wisdom could have thus deceived us; and every one will readily apply to the present subject these words of St. Augustine about the necessity of the Divine Being itself: "Faciliùs dubitarem vivere me, quàm non esse veritatem quæ per ea quæ facta sunt, intellecta conspicitur."*

SECTION III.

WORDS OF ST. PAUL CONCERNING THE RECEPTION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

After viewing the many and strong evidences of the Catholic dogma, which result from the words employed by Christ both in the promise and in the institution of the holy Eucharist, it may seem quite unnecessary to look after other arguments. However, since it has been the kind will of Almighty God to

* Confess. L. vii. c. 10.

supply us with a variety of proofs of the truth of this adorable mystery, in order both to strengthen the faith of its sincere believers, and to convince its adversaries of the error of their system: we will, in compliance with his designs, proceed in the same course of reasoning which we have hitherto pursued.

The Apostle St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, has a remarkable passage concerning the crime which is committed by the unworthy communicant, and about the dispositions which must be brought to the reception of the Eucharist. After relating the history of its institution in the same manner exactly as we find it recorded in the Gospel, and such as he had learned it from the Lord himself, (xi. 23, 25;) he adds: "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice.* For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."† Here we have a series of propositions fully deserving of notice, and well calculated, every one of them, to produce in the mind a deep conviction of the true and real presence of our Lord in the Eucharistic mystery.

In the first place, St. Paul, like the Evangelists, mentions in the plainest terms the body and blood of Christ as being given us at communion, and similar to

* *Drink of the chalice:* — This is said by way of supposition, namely, if one drinks of the chalice at all; but not by way of command to receive under both kinds; since, in the verse which immediately precedes, the Apostle has declared the sufficiency of either kind to receive both the body and the blood of Christ.

† 1 Corinth. xi. 27 — 29.

them says not one word which indicates a merely figurative presence. Now, one of these two must be said: either he meant with them that the body and blood of our Saviour are really and substantially present in the Eucharist, or he concurred with them in constantly telling us what Protestants assert we should not admit, and never telling us what they say we should believe. But this second member of the dilemma is necessarily false; therefore the first part, which expresses and contains the Catholic dogma, is necessarily true.

And we must not be startled by the fact, that both St. Paul, in the passage just cited, and our Lord himself, in the sixth chapter of St. John, sometimes designate the Eucharist by the word *bread;* for, that this appellation, (as also that of *wine*, if ever applied to the chalice,) can create no serious difficulty against a dogma so unequivocally taught by themselves, will, it is hoped, appear manifest from the following reasons. 1. As there is *bread* before the consecration, the Eucharist, without retaining afterwards the substance of it, can however be called by its name with as much propriety, as the rod of Aaron was still called *rod* after its being changed into a serpent; (Exod. vii. 12;) — as the water changed into wine in Cana of Galilee, was yet called *water*, though with the additional expression of its having become wine; (John ii. 9;) — as the blind whose sight had been restored, are still called *blind* by St. Matt. xi. 5. and St. Luke vii. 22. 2. Since the color, the shape and other appearances of *bread* remain in the Eucharist, this is another reason why it may occasionally receive *its name* even after the consecration, as we see that the angels whose apparitions we read of in the Bible, are frequently called *men*, *e. g.* Genes. xviii. 2, Jos. v. 13, Dan. ix. 21,

Acts i. 10; not because they were such, but because they appeared in human shape. 3. It is well known, on the one hand, that the word *bread* in the Scripture often signifies all kinds of food, as in Genes. iii. 19, and, on the other, that the Eucharist is the true aliment of our souls, as Christ himself testifies in saying: "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed;" (John vi. 56.) It was then very proper that this holy Sacrament should be sometimes designated by the appellation of *bread,* in order to remind us of this truth, that the flesh of Christ is that *heavenly bread* which was once promised and is now given to his children, according to these words, "the bread which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world," (John vi. 52,) and also to point out the admirable effects that are produced by the holy Eucharist in the soul of the devout communicant. For, as material bread feeds, supports and strengthens the body, so likewise this divine Sacrament nourishes the soul, fills her with heavenly grace, and is for her a pledge of blessed immortality.

To return to the text of St. Paul; we have seen in it, that "he who eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself;" (1 Corinth. xi. 29.) This is undoubtedly a very strong expression and an awful threat, which supposes a very heinous crime; nor do we read any where else, that "one eats and drinks judgment to himself," so as to become identified, as it were, with his own condemnation. Yet, all this is perfectly intelligible in the Catholic doctrine, according to which the unworthy reception of the Eucharist, being a direct profanation of the body and blood of our Saviour really present in it, is on that account a sin of a peculiarly outrageous nature, a foul

deed which turns the divine aliment into a poison for the soul, and a sacrilege worthy of the severest stroke of divine justice. But, in the Protestant theory, the Apostle should have had no reason to utter such threats and to use words so terrific. Since, in the system of the corporal absence of Christ from the Eucharist, his sacred body is not eaten by the unworthy receiver, there is consequently no danger of its being profaned, nor does there remain any adequate occasion for the dreadful punishment spoken of by St. Paul. — Again: the reason why the unworthy communicant is said to "eat and drink judgment to himself," is because "he does not discern the body of the Lord." But, what fault can be found with him for not discerning *the body of the Lord* in the Eucharist, if it is not substantially present there? Above all, how can he be said to be guilty "of the body and blood of the Lord," as the same Apostle asserts he is? (Ibid. 27.) Will it be answered, that it is because such a one treats in a disrespectful and irreverent manner the signs or memorials of that sacred body and blood?* — At this rate, since the manna and paschal lamb of old were also the figures of our Saviour's humanity, (and indeed much more impressive ones than bread and wine can be,) those Jews who ate of either in sinful dispositions, were guilty of the body and blood of the Lord! An irreverent son likewise, who would tram-

* How great is the inconsistency of our separated brethren! Decidedly adverse as they are to religious symbols and memorials, they strain every nerve to find one, exclusive of the reality, in the Holy Eucharist. Thus, whilst they discard the use of ceremonies, pictures and images where it ought to be admitted, they on the contrary admit an imaginary sign, and an empty symbol, where it ought evidently to be rejected.

ple under foot or break through contempt the portrait of his father, without however any further offence, is to be held guilty of the body and blood of his parent! Who can bear such language, or even understand it? It is true, there is a moral guilt in destroying or profaning the representations of persons worthy of respect, particularly the religious memorials of our divine Lord, of his blessed Mother and of his saints, because the insult offered to the image is equivalently offered to the person whom the image represents; and in this sense, truly guilty were the ancient Iconoclasts or Image-breakers, and the reformers also, who, after the lapse of several centuries, imitated their example. Yet, they were not on that account "guilty of the body and blood" of our Saviour or of his saints. These extraordinary expressions are too strong and energetic to signify only the profanation of an inanimate object, however sacred; and most assuredly mean something more, namely, an immediate and actual outrage offered to the person himself. Since, therefore, St. Paul makes use of them to designate the crime of the unworthy communicant, he necessarily pre-supposes the real and substantial presence of our Lord in the Eucharist; and thus is it evident that he fully concurs with the other inspired writers, in establishing this important dogma of the Catholic faith.

Let us conclude these proofs from the Scripture, by a remark well deserving of serious attention. The generality of Protestants willingly admit with us the mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation; they believe as we do, that there are three distinct persons in God, and but one divine nature; that there are two natures in Christ, and but one person. Still, it is impossible to discover in the whole Bible, texts more explicit and

more perspicuous in support of these mysteries, than those by which we have vindicated the truth of the Catholic dogma of the Eucharist. How does it happen, then, that believing the former, they reject the latter; and that they pay so little regard to the severity with which the practice of using two measures is reprobated by Almighty God in the Scripture, (Deuter. xxv. 13 — 16.) For, if that practice is so very displeasing in his sight even with regard to temporal concerns, what will it be in reference to his revealed truths, upon which our eternal salvation depends!

This will be still more impressive, if we transport ourselves in spirit before that awful tribunal, where we shall have one day to give a strict account of our faith as well as of our actions. Let us represent to ourselves, first, the Protestant when cited to appear in presence of the Sovereign Judge. What will he answer, when asked the reason of his disbelief of the Eucharistic mystery? What excuse will he be able to offer? what apology will he make, for having interpreted the words of Holy Writ in a figurative sense, when they positively exclude it, and for having said that there is in the Eucharist nothing more than a sign, or at most a certain virtue of the body and blood of Christ, whilst Christ himself has, in the plainest terms, declared it to be his body and blood? — Will not the Catholic, on the contrary, be entitled to say with perfect security and confidence: "O Lord, I received thy sacred words in their plain and obvious meaning, just as they were uttered by Thee, as they were recorded by thy Apostles, as they were constantly understood by thy Church; could I be wrong in doing so? Nay, could I do any thing better, than to believe thy Church, which thou hadst so strictly commanded

me to hear; thy Apostles, whom thou didst appoint to preach thy word and teach all nations in thy name; and THYSELF, who art the uncreated, eternal and infallible TRUTH!"

CHAPTER II.

PROOFS FROM TRADITION.

By Tradition is meant the *unwritten word*, as by Scripture is meant the *written word* of God. That, in matters of religion, the former is not less to be admitted than the latter, is evident from the Scripture itself. For we read in St. Matthew, (xxviii. 20,) that our Lord commissioned his Apostles to "go and teach *all things whatsoever* he had commanded them;" a commission which undoubtedly they faithfully executed. On the other hand, we learn from St. John, (xxi. 25,) that many of these things were not consigned to writing; whilst even those which the holy Apostles had occasion to write for a fuller instruction of the faithful, were chiefly to be preached and inculcated by word of mouth, according to this injunction of our Saviour: "Preach the Gospel to every creature;" (Mark xvi. 15;) and because "faith cometh by hearing," as St. Paul says, (Rom. x. 17.)

Again; St. Luke relates in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that Christ "showed himself alive to his disciples, after his passion, by many proofs; for forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the kingdom of God;" (Acts i. 3.) These instructions of our Saviour undoubtedly were not to be lost to the Church; since, therefore, we find but very few of

them recorded by the sacred penmen, they must have come down to us in another way, viz. through the preaching of the Apostles and the channel of tradition.

But, we have a still more explicit evidence of the existence and authority of tradition, in these words of St. Paul to the Thessalonians: "Therefore, brethren, stand firm: and hold the traditions which you have learned *whether by word* or by our epistle;" (2 Thess. ii. 14.) "And we charge you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother walking disorderly, and not according to the *tradition* which they have received of us;" (Ibid. iii. 6.) Hence we see in Ecclesiastical history, that the first general Councils, as well as those celebrated in later times, were ever careful to support the various points of the Christian doctrine, not only by quotations from Scripture, but also, by the concurring testimonies of the more ancient Fathers and Councils; a paramount rule which the Council of Trent confirmed by the following solemn decree: "Considering that the Christian truth and discipline is contained in the written books, and also in the unwritten traditions, which being received from the mouth of Christ himself by the Apostles, or delivered by them under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, have been transmitted, as it were, from hand to hand even to ourselves; the holy œcumenical and general Council of Trent, after the example of the orthodox Fathers, receives with equal devotion and respect, all the books of the Old and of the New Testament, both of which have God for their author; and also the traditions, whether they appertain to faith or to morals, as having been delivered by Christ or dictated by the Holy

Ghost, and preserved without any interruption in the Catholic Church."*

We are aware that Protestants reject, or at least feign to reject in theory, the authority of tradition; but, that they are obliged to admit it, and that they do really admit it in practice, appears from several undeniable facts. For, the generality of them believe with us, *e. g.* the inspiration of the four gospels neither more nor less, the validity of infant-baptism, also the validity of baptism conferred by heretics when administered in its proper matter and form, the obligation of keeping holy the Sunday instead of the Sabbath, etc. But, from what source are these various points of faith or discipline derived, except from tradition? They admit likewise, that neither the physical washing of one another's feet, nor the abstinence from blood and from things strangled mentioned in Holy Writ, is of strict obligation; but how do they know all this except through the channel of tradition? Again; if tradition, as they often pretend, has no weight in religious matters, why do they take so much trouble to search after, and why do they show so much readiness to lay hold on, any text or document of Christian antiquity, though ever so little favorable to their tenets? Since, therefore, their respect for a mere shadow of tradition is so great; what would it be, could they seriously fancy, at least for a time, that their religious opinions are upheld by the unanimous voice of tradition itself!

The truth is, that nothing is more powerful to refute their errors, and to vindicate the various parts of divine revelation, than the ancient tradition and constant

* Conc. Trid. Sess. iv. *Decr. de Canon. Script.*

belief of the Church, not only on account of its intrinsic weight, but also because it is an unquestionable evidence of the doctrine which was preached by the Apostles under the dictate of the Holy Ghost. And we do sincerely believe that there is, in fact, no course of reasoning, not even the quotation of the plain words of Scripture, which Protestants fear so much as this; because they find it an easier task to cavil at some isolated passages of Holy Writ, how explicit soever they may be, than to attack the powerful array of concurrent testimonies drawn from Tradition. Their perplexity in this matter is so much the greater, as we adduce, in proof of the Catholic doctrines, chiefly the passages of those illustrious Fathers who lived during the first centuries of the Christian era, and the belief of that primitive Church, which is venerated, and acknowledged to have been pure, by the generality of our dissenting brethren themselves.

Indeed, who can but venerate those learned and holy men, who, raised up by the Almighty in his Church to be both the witnesses and the defenders of her holy and apostolic faith, live still, we may say, in their admirable writings? Who can but readily believe such men as the Ignatiuses, the Polycarps, the Justins, the Irenæuses, the Cyprians, and other generous martyrs, who sealed with their blood the faith which they professed; — such men as the Athanasiuses, the Hilaries, the Basils, the Cyrils, and others, whom persecution carried from province to province, from country to country, to afford them the opportunity of giving a still more splendid testimony of the truth, and of confounding every where the wiles and artifices of error; — in fine, such brilliant geniuses as the Chrysostoms, the Leos, the Ambroses, the Jeromes, the

Augustines, the Gregories? Of what persons can it be more justly said that they are all worthy of our unqualified admiration; that they were truly great, not only before men, but also before God, whom they honored as well by the sanctity of their lives, as by their labors in defence of religion; and that their writings, like so many burning and shining lamps in the Church of Christ, still continue to spread around a glorious light, and to kindle in the hearts of the faithful the same fire of divine charity which glowed in the breasts of their sainted authors? Though persons of this description had no other credentials than the evidences of their own individual qualifications, still would they be deserving of our unbounded confidence.

But their authority rests upon still surer grounds. We do not merely consider them as private doctors; but chiefly in their quality of bishops appointed by the Holy Ghost, "to rule the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood," (Acts xx. 28;) and as the successors of the Apostles, with whom our Lord has promised to be "all days, even to the consummation of the world;" (Matt. xxviii. 20.) For, "some indeed he gave to be apostles, and some prophets, and others evangelists, and others pastors and teachers, for the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry, unto the edification of the body of Christ: till we all meet in the unity of faith . . . that we may not now be children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine;" (Ephes. iv. 11 — 14.) Consequently, when we hear and obey the voice of men invested with this divine mission, it is not so much their voice, as it is that of our Lord which we hear and obey, since he himself has said:

"He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me." (Luke x. 16.)

It is not, however, by any means, necessary to bring here in full array all the Fathers who have spoken of the holy Eucharist. Having already proved by numerous passages the perpetuity of the Catholic faith concerning this mystery, a few quotations more will be sufficient to ascertain in particular the belief and doctrine of the first ages of the Church, as sure evidence of apostolic tradition; the more so, as the Eucharist having ever been held as a dogma of explicit faith and a sacrament of daily or very frequent use, nothing was easier, not only for the pastors, but even for the common faithful, than to know the full import of its admission and practice. Indeed, if two or three witnesses are sufficient, even according to the rules prescribed by Divine Wisdom, to settle a question and convict a culprit; if, about the recital of past events, we give credit to one historian or two, *e. g.* a Josephus, a Tacitus, a Plutarch, a Livy, or others, who frequently lived a long time after the facts which they relate; how much more ought we to believe several learned and holy men unanimously testifying to us the public fact of the doctrine of their own time, about which it was equally impossible that they should have conspired to deceive us, or should have been deceived themselves! At all events, we will adduce as many of them as can be reasonably desired to produce conviction; and we will see, moreover, that their testimony is fully sustained and corroborated by the language of the liturgies and other authentic documents of antiquity.

Let us then, with entire confidence, apply to these unexceptionable witnesses of the doctrine and belief of

ancient times, in order to ascertain what was the faith of the primitive Church and the tradition of the Apostles relative to the holy Eucharist. Let us suppose ourselves to have been of the number of those neophytes who received regular instructions on this subject from the mouth of their pastors; and particularly of those for whom the following catechetical lecture was delivered at Jerusalem towards the year three hundred and forty-eight:

"The doctrine of the blessed Paul alone is sufficient to give certain proof of the truth of the divine mysteries; and you being deemed worthy of them, are become one body and one blood with Christ. For, this great Apostle says, that our Lord, in the same night wherein he was delivered, having taken bread and given thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying to them: "Take ye and eat, this is my body." Afterwards he took the cup, and said: "Take and drink, this is my blood." As then Christ, speaking of the bread, declared and said, "this is my body," who shall dare to doubt it? And as, speaking of the wine, he positively assured us, and said, "this is my blood," who shall doubt it, and say that it is not his blood?

"Jesus Christ, in Cana of Galilee, once changed water into wine by his will only; and shall we think him less worthy of credit, when he changes wine into blood? Invited to an earthly marriage, he wrought this miracle; and shall we hesitate to confess, that he has given to his children his body to eat, and his blood to drink? Wherefore, with all confidence, let us take the body and blood of Christ. For in the type or figure of bread, his body is given to thee, and in the type or figure of wine, his blood is given; that so being

made partakers of the body and blood of Christ, you may become one body and one blood with him. Thus, the body and blood of Christ being distributed in our members, we become *Christiferi*, that is, we carry Christ with us; and thus, as St. Peter says, "we are made partakers of the divine nature."

"In the old dispensation there were loaves of bread which were offered before God, and because they pertained to that old dispensation, they have ceased with it; but now in the new dispensation, there is a heavenly bread and a cup of salvation which sanctify soul and body; for as the bread is the nourishment which is proper to the body, so the Word is the nourishment which is proper to the soul. Wherefore I conjure you, my brethren, not to consider them any more as mere bread and wine, since they are THE BODY AND BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST according to his words; and although your sense might suggest that to you, let faith confirm you. Judge not of the thing by your taste, but by faith assure yourself, without the least doubt, that you are honored with the body and blood of Christ: this knowing, and of this being assured, that what appears to be bread, is not bread, though it be taken for bread by the taste, but the body of Christ; and that which appears to be wine, is not wine, though the taste will have it so, but the blood of Christ."*

Should a Protestant read or hear somewhere this passage, without knowing its real author and the time in which it was written, he would no doubt ascribe it to some *Popish* priest or monk, probably one who lived in the *dark ages*. But no; that pretended ignorant monk or Popish priest of the dark ages is found to be

* S. Cyril. Hieros. *Catech. Mystag.* iv.

no other than the illustrious St. Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem in the fourth century, to whose eminent merits and virtues the Council of Constantinople of 382 gave a solemn testimony, and whose long episcopacy during one of the most brilliant periods of the Church, God himself was pleased to signalize by a variety of prodigies, among others, by the miraculous defeat of the Emperor Julian's attempt to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem. This was the holy prelate who, in the catechetical instruction just cited and delivered to the neophytes, that is, to a class of persons whom it would have been a most awkward thing to address on religious matters in a figurative language, explained the Christian doctrine about the real presence and transubstantiation, in the plainest style he could command. Can there be a more explicit testimony of the faith of ancient times on this subject? Could any Catholic at the present day express himself more clearly than does here St. Cyril, and inculcate in stronger terms the change of the whole substance of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, in the Eucharistic mystery?

Nor is this language peculiar to St. Cyril; we find it to have been used by the other holy Fathers, particularly by St. Ambrose, the celebrated archbishop of Milan, who died in the year 397. In his work *De Mysteriis*, composed for the newly baptized, he says: "The manna in the desert was given in figure. You have known things more excellent. For, light is preferable to the shadow; truth to the figure; the body of Christ to the manna of heaven. But you may say, I see somewhat else; how do you assert, that I shall receive the body of Christ? This remains to be proved. How many examples may we not make use

of, to show that we have not here what nature formed, but what the divine blessing has consecrated; and that the virtue of this blessing is more powerful than that of nature, because by it nature itself is changed! Moses held the rod: he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent. Again he took it by the tail, and again it became a rod. See you not that, by the prophetic power, the nature of the rod and of the serpent was twice changed?" — Here the holy doctor proceeds to instance many other wonders as recorded in the Scripture, and then adds: "If now the blessing of men was powerful enough to change nature, what must we not say of the divine consecration, where the very words of our Lord operate? For, that sacrament which you receive, is accomplished by the word of Christ. If the word of Elias could call down fire from heaven, shall not the word of Christ be able to change the form of the elements? You have read concerning the creation of the world: "He spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it was formed." Therefore the word of Christ, which could draw out of nothing what was not, shall it not be able to change the things that are, into that which they were not? For it is not a less effect of power to give new existence to things, than to change the natures that were. We will now establish the truth of the mystery, from the example itself of the Incarnation. Was the order of nature followed, when Jesus was born of a Virgin? Plainly, not. — Then, why is that order to be looked for here? It was the true flesh of Christ which was crucified, which was buried; and this is truly the sacrament of his flesh. Our Lord himself proclaims: "This is my body."* — Thus far St. Ambrose, whose

* St. Ambr. *De Mysteriis*, c. viii.

words are too clear of themselves, to need any comment.

Our next quotation will be from the incomparable doctor and light of the eastern Church, St. John Chrysostom, archbishop of Constantinople, in his twenty-fourth homily on the first epistle to the Corinthians. Explaining these words of the Apostle: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" (1 Corinth. x. 16,) he says:

"These words are well calculated to animate our faith and inspire us with fear; for they signify: That which is in the chalice, is the very same blood which flowed from the side of our Saviour, and we are partakers of it; and as to the body of Christ, we are also made partakers, not merely of the altar, as the ancient Jews were, but of Christ himself. . . . . If therefore no one would be rash enough to receive with carelessness and indifference a king who should come to visit him, not even to touch with unclean hands the royal garment, which after all is nothing better than the produce of worms; if, I say, no one dares rashly to touch the vestment of a man: how shall we presume to receive without respect the pure and spotless body of the Supreme Lord of the universe: that body which is united to the divine nature; by which we are and we live; by which the powers of hell have been crushed, and the gates of heaven opened? Let us not then, by our unworthiness, inflict death on ourselves; but let us approach to receive it with all purity and respect; and when it is presented to you, say to yourself: This is the body by which I am no longer mere dust and ashes, no longer a captive, but free. This is the body which

makes me hope, that I shall one day possess heaven and enjoy its goods, that I shall obtain eternal life, that I shall be admitted to the happiness of the Angels and to the company of Christ. That body, though pierced with nails and cruelly scourged, was not destroyed by death. That body was no sooner crucified, than on its account the sun diverted its rays, the veil was rent, the rocks were split, and the whole earth was in commotion. This is the body which was covered with wounds, pierced with a lance, and from which gushed out two salutary streams, the one of blood, the other of water. This body, Christ, in his immense charity for men, has given us to possess and to eat.

"Let us, therefore, approach to receive it with great fervor and with an ardent love, lest we should render ourselves worthy of punishment. For, the greater the benefits are which we receive, the more severely shall we be punished, if we show ourselves unworthy of them. The wise men reverenced that body, even when it was lying in a manger. These infidels and barbarians left their country and their homes, and going a long journey, they came and adored it with great respect and fear. Shall we not then, we who are the citizens of heaven, at least imitate the conduct of barbarians? For although they found this body in the stable and in the manger, and saw none of the things which are now before your eyes, they however approached it with profound respect; as for you, it is no longer in the manger that you see it, but upon the altar; not in the arms of a woman, but in the hands of the priest. Wherefore, let us excite ourselves, and be filled with awe, and show still greater piety than the wise men did, in order that we may not approach rashly and inconsiderately, and thus heap fire on our

heads. I do not say this to prevent you from approaching; for, exactly as it is dangerous to approach rashly, so also not to participate in this mysterious supper is to die of hunger, and to be consumed by exhaustion. That table is the strength of our souls, the support of our hearts, the source of our confidence; it is our hope, our salvation, our light and our life.

"If we depart this life after the reception of so great a Sacrament, being, as it were, covered with a golden armor on all sides, we shall proceed with confidence towards the sanctuary of heaven. But why should I speak of future things, whilst this mystery changes the earth into a paradise for you? Open then the gates of heaven, even of the heaven of heavens, and consider; you will see what I have told you. That which is most precious there, I will show it to you present upon earth. For, it is not the wall, nor a gilt roof, but the body of the King sitting upon a throne, which is the most magnificent object in a palace; so in heaven also, it is the body of our Lord, and this is the very body which you are allowed to see upon earth. In fact, I do not show to you merely the Angels, the Archangels, the heavens, and the heaven of heavens, but the Sovereign Lord of all these things himself. Do you not see that you possess here on earth the most precious of all treasures! Nay, you do not see it only, but you touch it; and you do not touch it only, but even you eat it, and carry it to your homes."*

What a splendid text in favor of the Catholic dogma on the Eucharist is this passage of St. John Chrysostom! And since the author of it was universally admired and applauded for his doctrine, and revered for

* S. Joann. Chrysost. *Homil.* xxiv. *in Epist.* i. *ad Corinth.*

his sanctity, both in the East and the West, can a stronger testimony be desired to prove that the faith of the ancient Church, concerning this mystery, was exactly the same which Catholics profess at present? As it would be useless to insist much longer on so clear a point, let us conclude this part of our quotations by adducing the following words of St. Cyril, who was patriarch of Alexandria during the first period of the fifth century, and the invincible champion of the faith against the heresy of Nestorius.

"*I am*, says Christ, *the living bread which came down from heaven;* (John vi. 51.) The manna was the type, was the shadow, and the image. Hear again how openly and plainly he speaks: *I am the living bread; if any man shall eat of this bread, he shall live for ever;* (Ibid. 52.) They that ate of the manna, are dead, because it gave not life; he that eats this bread, that is *me*, or *my flesh*, shall live for ever. Our Lord Jesus, by his own flesh gives life to us; inserts, as it were, in us the seed of immortality, destroying all the corruption that is in us. — And his blood is not that of any common man, but that of his own natural life. Wherefore, receiving the Son within us, we are called the body and members Christ; *for, he which eateth my body and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him;* (Ibid. 57.)

"The Jews strove among themselves, saying: *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* (Ibid. 53.) This *How* is a Jewish exclamation, and a cause of the severest punishment. For, will *they* be not worthy of the greatest torments, who so contemn God, the creator of all things, as to dare to put the question *How* concerning his operations? The ill-disposed, indocile man, immediately with arrogance rejects as frivolous

and false, whatsoever he does not understand; yielding to no one, and thinking that there is nothing which is above his comprehension. And of this caste, we shall discover were the Jews: for whereas they ought readily to have received the words of our Saviour, whose divine virtue and power had been evinced to them by the evidence of his miracles, and had any things appeared difficult, they should have asked a solution of them; they are seen to act quite contrary-wise. With one voice they addressed to God, with great impiety, the language: *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* And they reflected not that *nothing is impossible with God.* But if thou, O Jew! continuest yet to urge this *How*, I will in like manner ask thee *how* the rod of Moses was changed into a serpent; *how* the waters were changed into the nature of blood. Wherefore, it would have much more become you to believe Christ, and humbly to ask of him whatever seemed difficult, than sottishly to exclaim: *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* Do you not see that, when such language is uttered, great arrogance is manifested? For our part, let us derive great instruction from the iniquity of others; and cherishing a firm faith in these mysteries, let us never, on so sublime a point, in words express, or in thoughts entertain this *How*. . . Let us receive the body of life itself, that life which for us has dwelt in our body; and let us drink his sacred blood for the remission of our sins, in order to partake of that immortality which is in him: believing Christ to be the priest and the victim, him that offers and is offered." *

* S. Cyril. Alexandr. *Comment. in Joann. L.* iv.; — et *Homil. in Mysticam Cœnam.*

There is another passage of the same holy doctor, which must have an immense weight with every one, as we find it inserted among the acts of the general Council of Ephesus; a circumstance which, from the number of bishops who composed that venerable assembly, gives us at once two hundred authoritative witnesses of the belief held by the ancient Church on the Eucharist. That passage runs thus: "We offer in the churches the holy, vivifying and unbloody sacrifice; receiving the body which is presented to us, and likewise the precious blood, not as of a mere ordinary man, but as having been made the proper body and blood of the Divine Word."* The three hundred and eighteen bishops of the first general Council of Nice in 325, had previously expressed their belief in the same dogma, by enacting this decree; "No canon of the Church, nor custom allows that those who have not the power of offering the sacrifice, should present the body of Christ to those by whom it is offered."† In fine, we have another splendid testimony of the faith of ancient times, in these words of the second Council of Nice, which, though they have been already quoted, appear to us fully deserving of being cited again in this place: "Never has it been said by our Lord, or by the Apostles, or by the Fathers, that the unbloody sacrifice offered by the priests, is only an image of Christ, but they have called it his true body and blood. The elements have indeed the name of antitypes before they are sanctified; but after the consecration, they are called, they are held to be, and they really are the body and the blood of Christ."‡ It

* Apud Labbeum, vol. viii. p. 825.

† Conc. Nic. I. Can. 18.

‡ Conc. Nic. II. Act. 6.

is true, the second Council of Nice, was held only towards the end of the eighth century, (in 787); still, no one will deny that the three hundred and fifty bishops who were present at it, had better means to ascertain, and were better qualified to attest, the antiquity and apostolic origin of the doctrine of the real presence and transubstantiation unanimously taught in their dioceses, than the opponents of that same doctrine, who have come so many centuries later. Moreover, if any one desires to have, not more authentic, but more ancient testimonies concerning the same truth, he may be easily satisfied by similar quotations from the Liturgies which have always been used in the Church, from the earliest ages.

The *Roman Liturgy*, which is believed to come originally from St. Peter, directs the priest to pray thus, immediately before the consecration: "We beseech thee, O God! to cause that this oblation may be in all things blessed, admitted, ratified, reasonable and acceptable; that it may become for us the body and blood of thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ."

Liturgy of Jerusalem, also called the *Liturgy of St. James:* "Have mercy on us, O God the Father Almighty, and send thy Holy Spirit, the lord and giver of life, equal in dominion to thee and to thy Son; who descended in the likeness of a dove on our Lord Jesus Christ; who descended on the holy Apostles in the likeness of tongues of fire: that coming, he may make this bread the life-giving body, the saving body, the heavenly body, the body giving health to souls and bodies, the body of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and eternal life to those who receive it; amen. And may make what is mixed in this chalice, the blood of the New Testament,

the saving blood, the life-giving blood, the heavenly blood, the blood giving health to souls and bodies, the blood of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ; amen."

Liturgy of Alexandria, called also the *Liturgy of St. Mark:* "O Lord, our God! send down upon us, and upon this bread and this chalice, thy Holy Spirit; that he may sanctify and consecrate them, as God Almighty; and may make the bread indeed the body, and the chalice the blood of the New Testament of the very Lord, and God, and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Ambrosian Liturgy, which was in use at Milan, when St. Ambrose was elected bishop of that see in 374, and to which he made some additions, though no substantial ones: "Receive, O most merciful Father, this holy bread, that it may be made the body; . . . . and this chalice, that it may be made the blood of thy only begotten Son."

Liturgy of St. Basil, or *Syriac Liturgy:* "O Lord! may thy Holy Spirit come down upon us, and upon these gifts which we have presented, and may he sanctify them, and make this bread the glorious body; and this chalice the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Liturgy of Constantinople, called also the *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom:* "Bless, O Lord, the holy bread; make indeed this bread the precious body of thy Christ. Bless, O Lord! the holy chalice, and what is in this chalice, the precious blood of thy Christ; changing by the Holy Spirit."

In a word, let all the Liturgies, Greek, Arabic, Latin, Gallican, and others, be perused; in all of them will be found prayers addressed to the Almighty, that he would consecrate, by his Holy Spirit, the gifts

offered, and *make them the body and blood of his Son;* which is exactly the Catholic dogma of the real presence and transubstantiation. Consequently, it is a truth as plain as day-light, that the admission of this doctrine in the Church is as ancient as it has always been universal; that there was no other doctrine in the primitive times; that it must have come necessarily from a common source, viz. the preaching and the injunctions of the Apostles; and, by an ultimate and unavoidable consequence, that it is a part of the divine revelation.*

CHAPTER III.

PROOFS FROM THE UNANIMOUS BELIEF OF ALL CHRISTIAN SOCIETIES, THE PROTESTANTS ALONE EXCEPTED.

It is well known that, besides the great number of Catholics spread throughout the east, there exist several other societies of Christians, some of which, like those of the Nestorians and Eutychians, separated themselves from the Catholic Church, during the course of the fifth century, and others, like the Russians and schismatic Greeks, some centuries later. Not long after the rise of the Protestant reformation, the Lutherans of Germany made several attempts to gain the

* See, on that subject, Abbé Renaudot, *Liturgiarum orientalium collectio;* — Bishop Kenrick, *Theolog. Dogmat.* vol. iii.; — Bishop Trevern, *Amicable Discussion:* — F. Le Brun, *Explication de la Messe*, vols. iii. iv. v. vi.; — Bergier, *Dictionnaire de Théologie*, art. *Liturgies;* — *Theolog. Rothom.* vol. viii. *De Eucharistiâ;* — Dr. Poynter's *Christianity*, and Berington's *Faith of Catholics.*

Greek Church over to their party; but all was in vain: their doctrine was rejected with indignation, and their repeated efforts to have it approved, especially towards the year 1574, only served to draw upon it the following censure from Jeremias, patriarch of Constantinople: "We learn that you maintain, concerning the Lord's Supper, opinions which we do not approve. It is a truth acknowledged by the holy Church, that, after the consecration, the bread is changed into the very body, and the wine into the very blood of Christ, by the power of the Holy Ghost." The same doctrine he inculcated over again in his second answer to the theologians of the Protestant party; as may be seen in the work published in 1584 by these theologians themselves, under the title of *Acta et scripta theologorum Wittembergensium et Patriarchæ Constantinopolitani*, pp. 86 and 240.

About the year 1630, the Dutch Calvinists made, for the same end, a new effort which seemed at first more successful, but soon turned to their own confusion. A certain Cyril Lucar, who had imbibed the Protestant principles in his travels through Europe, having been subsequently raised by means of intrigues and money to the patriarchal chair, first of Alexandria, and then of Constantinople, published in his own name, a Calvinian profession of faith. This was no sooner known, than the Greeks arose against this hireling and false pastor; he was deposed, and his doctrine was solemnly condemned in a Council held at Constantinople in 1638, under his successor, Cyril of Berea. Here, three patriarchs and twenty-three oriental bishops, together with all the clergy of the imperial city, pronounced anathema against Cyril Lucar, "as teaching and believing that the bread and wine

are not changed, by the blessing of the priest and the coming of the Holy Ghost, into the true body and blood of Jesus Christ." This condemnation was renewed in another council and under the very next patriarch of Constantinople (Parthenius the Elder,) in 1642.*

About the same time, appeared "the orthodox confession of the Oriental Church," first drawn up by four Russian bishops attached to the Greek communion, and formally approved in 1643 by four patriarchs and many other eastern bishops, to whom it was sent for examination and acceptance. It was printed several times and in different places, even in Holland and Germany, for instance, at Leipsig, A. D. 1695. In this book then, so unanimously acknowledged for a public confession of faith, the Greek Church thus expresses her belief relative to the holy Eucharist: "No sooner are the words of consecration pronounced, than the transubstantiation takes place, the bread being changed into the true body of Christ, and the wine into his true blood; and in virtue of the divine will, there remains nothing of the bread and wine, except the appearances."

Still more numerous were the authentic declarations, not only of the Greek Church, but also of the other Christian societies of the east, concerning their belief of the real presence and transubstantiation, when, under the reign of Louis XIV, it was called in

* See, for abundant proofs of these facts, as well as of the authenticity of the many documents which we shall adduce in this chapter: *Perpétuité de la Foi*, vols. i. and iii.; — F. Le Brun, *Explication de la Messe*, vols. iii. — vi.; — F. Scheffmacher, *Lettres d'un Docteur Catholique*, vii. — viii.; — and the renowned theologian Collet, in his treatise *De Eucharistiâ*, pt. I., ch. 1. art. ii. sect. vi.

question by the French Calvinists, especially by Claude, the famous minister of Charenton. This attack upon the faith which those eastern Christians have always held, and which they continue to hold to this day, filled them all with horror and indignation; they loudly complained of it and of its authors, calling it an odious temerity and imposture. They did still more, and the better to repel the charge, they every where hastened to draw up and send to France vigorous protests, the originals of which were deposited in the Royal and Benedictine Libraries at Paris.

I. *Greeks of the Patriarchate of Constantinople.* — Methodius, who ascended the patriarchal chair in 1667, gave to the French ambassador a writing signed with his own hand, in which he spoke thus: "The wickedness of some heretics in France has come to such a pitch, that, in order to palliate the guilt of their conscience, they have had the boldness to impute their Calvinian error to the orthodox Church of Jesus Christ which is spread throughout the east: writing and teaching that it entirely agrees with them on the subject of the Eucharist, and on some other of their opinions, which are considered amongst us as so many blasphemies. Wherefore I, reading these things, have thought myself bound to shut the mouths of persons so bold by making this protest. . . . We say that the bread and wine, after the consecration made by the priest, are changed from their own substance into the true and proper substance of Jesus Christ; and though the same accidents appear, there remains however neither bread nor wine."

This declaration of Methodius was soon followed by another, the work of seven Greek metropolitans, who happened to be assembled at Constantinople, and who

attested their belief in these terms: "We say, 1. That the living body of Jesus Christ, which was crucified, which ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, is truly, though invisibly, present in the Eucharist. — 2. That the bread and wine, after the prayer of the priest and the consecration, are changed from their own substance into the real body and blood of Jesus Christ, and although the accidents remain and show the appearances of bread and wine, yet they are neither bread nor wine. — 3. That the Eucharist is a sacrifice for the living and the dead, which was instituted by Christ and has been transmitted to us by apostolic tradition. — 4. That the body of Christ is eaten whole and entire, in an impassible manner, by those who receive it, worthy and unworthy; the former receiving it for their salvation, and the latter for their condemnation. . . . . We, the children of the Oriental Church, believe without the least difficulty all these things with the heart, and confess them with the mouth, having, ever since the earliest antiquity, received from the Fathers and holy Councils the tradition which makes us so believe; and those who hold a different doctrine, are in a fatal and pernicious error. Given at Pera (a suburb of Constantinople), July 18, A. D. 1671. — Signed Bartholomeus of Heraclea; — Jeremias of Chalcedon; — Methodius of Pisidia; — Metrophanes of Cyzicum; — Antony of Athens; — Joachim of Rhodes; — and Neophytus of Nicomedia."

In the following year, 1672, the new patriarch of Constantinople, Dionysius of Larissa, thought it his duty to evince the same zeal which his predecessors had displayed, in making known to foreigners the real doctrine of the Greek Church. In order to stamp

greater authenticity and solemnity on his proceedings, he assembled no fewer than thirty-nine metropolitans, with whom and also with the patriarch of Alexandria, he issued the following declaration: "We believe and profess without the least doubt, concerning the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, that the living body of our Lord Jesus Christ is invisibly present by a real presence in the sacrament. . . . For, by the operation of the most Holy Spirit, the bread is truly and properly changed, in a supernatural and ineffable manner, into the proper body of Christ, and the wine into his living blood: and we do believe that it is Jesus Christ himself, whole and entire, who offers and who is offered, who is received and distributed to all, and who is eaten whole and entire in an impassible manner. Those who receive him worthily, are vivified, being united to Christ himself; and those who receive him unworthily, are condemned. This sacrament is worthy of a true adoration, and is offered in sacrifice for all the orthodox Christians, living and dead." — This declaration is signed by the patriarch Dionysius and forty other prelates.

II. *The Greeks of the Patriarchate of Antioch*, were not less eager than the clergy of Constantinople, in testifying their belief of the real presence and transubstantiation. In an authentic act, written and sealed at Damascus on the third of May, 1673, they expressed themselves thus: "The Lord Messiah, who is omnipotent, having taken bread in his sacred hands, having blessed it, and broken, and given to his disciples, saying, "take and eat, this is my body, which is broken for the remission of your sins;" then having taken the chalice, and having blessed it, and given to his disciples, saying; "Drink ye all of this; this is

my blood of the New Testament, shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins:" it ought to be admitted that the bread and wine were transferred from their own substance into the substance of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that, what he himself did, he gave to the priests the power to do, by this mighty word: "Do this for the commemoration of me." As for us, we profess with a steady faith, that the bread and the wine laid on the holy table, are transferred and changed from their proper substance of bread and wine, and that they pass into the proper and true substance of our Lord Jesus Christ, in virtue of the substantial word which is pronounced upon them, viz.; *this is my body — this is my blood;* and that, after this, there remains nothing of the bread and wine, except the appearances. And as the Messiah was truly in the womb of the Virgin, after she had conceived him by the power of the Holy Ghost, so he is likewise in the breast of those who receive him, being the salvation of those who receive him worthily, and the condemnation of those who receive him unworthily." This attestation is signed by the patriarch Neophytus, by five archbishops, and by many priests, deacons and laymen.

It had been preceded a few years before (A. D. 1668) by another act of the same kind, which, although less solemn, is scarcely less valuable. "We ought to profess," it says, "that the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist is, in virtue of the divine consecration, truly and substantially the body and blood of Christ. This divine consecration changes the substance of the bread into the substance of the body, and the substance of the wine into the substance of the blood. — Nor is it proper to inquire how this is done, any more than it

is proper curiously to investigate how Christ changed water into wine in Cana of Galilee." — After establishing in the same forcible way several other points of the Catholic doctrine, the authors of this declaration, conclude thus: "Such is the belief of us all orthodox Greeks; and so we have been taught by our Fathers. This doctrine we have received from them, and shall for ever hold, and there is none amongst us, nor ever was, bold enough to contradict it. This is the approved faith and the true profession." — Here follow the signatures of six curates of the patriarchate of Antioch, with two seals.

III. *Russians or Muscovites*, whose religious belief is otherwise known to be the same with that of the Greek Church. M. de Pompone, the French ambassador at the court of Sweden, anxious to ascertain their doctrine on the subject of the Eucharist, applied for information to M. Lilienthal, the Swedish resident near the Czar at Moscow. This resident, or consul, requested Païsius Ligaridius, a prelate of remarkable learning and abilities, to give him an express declaration on this point; and he actually obtained a very extensive answer in writing, dated November, 1666, in which, among other things, it was said:

"We, (namely, the members of the Græco-Russian Church,) do confess and believe, that the bread and the wine laid on the altar are changed and converted into the body and the blood of Christ, by a secret power which exceeds all human language. . . . This is not a fanciful metamorphosis, nor a fictitious change, but a true and perfect transubstantiation, (*verissima transubstantiatio*,) by which the whole substance of the bread is converted into the body of our Lord, and the whole substance of the wine is changed into the

blood of Christ; so that there does not remain a single atom of the substance of the bread and wine, and only their accidents or visible appearances remain. . . . . For that reason, therefore, does the Church our mother call this change *transubstantiation;* a word as justly derived from the Gospel," (that is, from the words of our Saviour, when, after having taken in his hands bread and wine, he converted them into his body and blood, saying:) "this is my body — this is my blood;" as the word *consubstantial* is derived from these other words of Christ: "I and the Father are one."

"The Eucharist is not only a sacrament, but also a sacrifice — the sacrifice of the Mass, through which the price of our redemption once purchased on the cross is applied to us, not by way of justification as in the sacraments, but by way of propitiation. . . . The body of Christ is daily offered and immolated at Mass, not in a bloody manner, but by an unbloody though real oblation, through the ministry of the priests."

The Swedish Minister through whom this valuable document was obtained, added to it his own testimony, and declared that he could not conceive why there should be any doubt entertained about the belief of the Muscovites in transubstantiation, since public marks of that belief were daily given in the streets of Moscow, the people prostrating themselves on the ground, in order to adore the Blessed Sacrament when it is carried to sick persons.

There exists another written attestation of nearly the same date, which was forwarded to the archbishop of Sens by a priest of Moscow and three other persons belonging to the retinue of the Russian ambassador, and in which they said: "In the name of our God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We, the undersigned,

hold and testify that, after the priest has pronounced the words of God upon the bread and wine, there is no longer bread and wine, but the essential body and the essential blood of Jesus Christ our God. The appearance of bread and wine is perceived, but we must acknowledge in that holy mystery the body and blood of our Saviour; because, by these divine words, the bread and the wine are changed into the true body and blood of Christ the Son of God. . . . . This truth, we do believe, and are ready to lay down our lives for it." — Here follow, in the original, four subscriptions, the first of which is that of the priest whom we have mentioned, and whose name was Juan Irvanouvitz.

IV. *Armenians.* — We shall also produce three declarations of the belief of that numerous and widely spread nation, which reckons among its members many partisans of the errors of Eutyches.* The first was delivered in the most regular and authentic form, by twelve Armenian bishops and priests residing at Aleppo, in these words: "We, the undersigned bishops and priests, do testify against the errors of certain heretics, that this is the faith and doctrine of all the churches of our communion concerning the body of Christ in the holy Eucharist. We profess and firmly believe, as we have hitherto always believed together with the other Catholics, that the body and the blood of Christ are truly contained under the species of the consecrated bread; since the Lord said that he gave to his Apostles his body, which he was

* Eutyches, the superior of a large monastery near Constantinople, denied the distinction of the two natures, divine and human, in Christ. His heresy was condemned in the general Council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451.

going to deliver for us on the altar of the cross. Hence, we condemn as heretics all those who have asserted, that the bread and wine have been given us only as a figure of the body and blood of Christ. Afterwards, we believe that the nature of the bread and wine is really and substantially changed into the body and blood of our Saviour, in virtue of the divine words which the priest pronounces over the things offered; so that there remains nothing at all of the bread and wine, except the form and the other accidents. Then we adore, by the worship of Latria, Christ residing in the holy Eucharist, and we offer, in the most holy sacrifice of the Mass, for the remission of sins of both the living and the dead, that very same body which was crucified, and that blood which was shed on Mount Calvary. . . . . If any one, in his rashness, dares to contradict these things, let him be anathema. Given at Aleppo, March 1, in the year of the Armenians 1117, of the Latins 1668."

A question having been proposed, on the same subject and about the same time, to an Armenian patriarch, he gave the following answer: "We have heard that it has been asserted by some persons, that the eastern Christians, those excepted who are united with the See of Rome, do not believe the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist to be the true body of Christ; and we much wonder at the folly and boldness of these persons, who thus presume to speak of what they do not know. For, all the eastern Christians of this time believe with unshaken and unhesitating faith, that in the sacrifice of the Mass, the bread is truly changed into the body, and the wine into the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; nay, they never had any doubt about it, and never yielded to that infidelity which, as we hear,

is now professed by some nominal Christians. We therefore do assure you, that we Armenians have received from our ancient patriarchs, ever since the Council of Nice (*the epoch of their conversion to Christianity*) till the present time, this article of faith; having, moreover, the following invocation in our liturgy, besides the words of consecration: *Almighty Father, send down thy Holy Spirit, and by his co-operation change this bread into the body, and this wine into the blood of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Behold here, that these tenets which we hold and believe, are the same with those of the Roman Church, except some ceremonies in which we differ." This declaration is signed by the patriarch, called Haviadour, and by an Armenian doctor, who seems to have been the companion of his travels.

Shortly after this, another splendid attestation to the same effect was sent to France, from the patriarch and bishops of the Armenians in Cilicia. Their faith and doctrine on the Eucharist were expressed in these terms: "We firmly hold and believe, that the same body of Christ which was crucified for us and which sitteth at the right hand of the Father, is really, though invisibly, present in the Eucharist under the appearances of bread and wine; because the bread and the wine are converted into the true body and blood of Christ in such a manner, that nothing remains of these two elements, except the accidents. . . . This is the orthodox doctrine of our Church, which we have received, which we cherish with our whole heart and strength, and in which we constantly glory and rejoice." Signed Cruciador, patriarch; Paul, archbishop; Gregory, archbishop; etc. Of the Armenian era 1121, from the birth of Christ 1672.

V. *Copts* and *Abyssinians*, or Eutychians of Egypt and Ethiopia. — We have an authentic testimonial of their faith in the real presence and transubstantiation, from their patriarch Matthew, who wrote thus to the purpose: "I, the abject Matthew; by the incomprehensible grace of God, patriarch of the great city of Alexandria, and of the provinces of Egypt, Ethiopia, Nubia, etc. address myself to all persons full of charity who will see and read this writing. We have been informed that the heretics of France obstinately attack the truth of the holy Eucharist, saying that Christ is not really present in it, but only in figure. They say likewise of us, that we do not believe the change of the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, nor his true presence in the Eucharist after the consecration.

"Wherefore, in order to remove all sort of doubt, we now declare to them our belief, and we tell them in the face of the world, that the Copts receive and firmly hold this true faith, that the body itself of Jesus Christ, which ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, is really and substantially, though invisibly, present in the Eucharist. We believe on this particular point whatever the Latins believe, agreeing with them about it, although we are divided from them on some other points. We believe and say, that the wicked as well as the just receive the body of Christ in their mouth, the former indeed for their ruin, and the latter for their salvation. We say and we believe, that the bread and the wine are truly changed into the substance of the body of Christ and into the substance of his precious blood; so that the substance of the bread and the substance of the wine no longer remain after the consecration.

"We believe and hold for certain, that this is the faith derived from the words of Christ our Lord, which has been, till the present day, transmitted to us by the tradition of our ancestors, of the holy Apostles and the holy Fathers, and which we will preserve until death. We excommunicate all persons whatever who hold opinions contrary to this apostolic faith, and who deny the change of the substance of the bread into the substance of Jesus Christ. We declare this to all those who shall read or attack this writing."

VI. *Surians* or *Eutychians of Syria*, also called *Jacobites*, from Jacob Baradæus, their chief leader in the sixth century. On the twenty-ninth of February, 1668, they delivered to the French Consul, and signed in his presence, this declaration of their faith.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. 1. We firmly believe that the body and the blood of Christ are contained truly and really in the Eucharist, and not in figure and virtue only, as some new heretics have fancied. 2. Likewise, that the bread and wine are, in virtue of the divine consecration, really and substantially changed and converted, or, what is the same, transubstantiated into the true body and blood of Christ. 3. That Christ truly residing in the Eucharist, is to be adored by the worship of Latria, (or supreme worship,) and is thus adored by all the faithful of our Church. 4. That in the sacred liturgy a true, a properly so-called and propitiatory sacrifice is offered to God for the living and the dead.

"This is and always has been the belief of our churches: having received it from our ancestors, we preserve and shall preserve it; nor is there amongst us mention made and remembrance kept of any one

having ever taught otherwise. This we do testify on the twenty-ninth of February, 1668." — Here follow the subscriptions of twelve bishops or priests.

VII. *Nestorians.** — Their patriarch Joseph, residing in the city of Diarbekir, sent to the French ambassador at Constantinople, and thence to Paris, this attestation signed by himself and by six of his priests: "We, the metropolitan and priests of the Nestorian Church in the city of Diarbekir, have learned with very great surprise that a certain son of Satan in France, (Claude, minister of Charenton,) has dared offer an atrocious insult to the Oriental Church, by falsely asserting that we do not believe and receive the very great mystery of the sacred oblation. In order, then, to dispel the doubt which that evil spirit has attempted to throw into the minds of men, we say, we testify and declare to all who shall read this protest, that the faith and doctrine of the whole Eastern Church, which she holds and professes in regard to this holy mystery, the Eucharist, is the faith and doctrine of the Gospel; the very same which has been received without any interruption from the earliest antiquity to the present day, in all the churches of the East. Christ has said that he gave us his body, the same which was to be delivered for us; and he who says that Christ gives us only bread and wine as a

* Followers of Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, who denied the unity of person in Christ, and the divine Maternity in the blessed Virgin. His doctrine was condemned by the general Council of Ephesus, in 431; but, notwithstanding this condemnation, his partisans spread themselves nearly all over the east, in Mesopotamia, Persia, India, etc. There now remain but few persons adhering to that error; a great number of its abettors having been of late converted through the zeal and labors of Catholic missionaries.

likeness and a figure of his body and blood, is not a Christian. We firmly believe, that after the words of our Lord, which the priest pronounces by divine authority, the substance of the bread is changed into the substance of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that the substance of the wine is changed into the substance of his precious blood; so that there remains nothing of the bread and wine, except the accidents of both. We offer that sacred body crucified for us, and that blood shed for many and for us, that is to say, for the living and the dead, for the remission of their sins and of the punishments which they have deserved. We anathematize those who say the contrary, and who do not receive this doctrine. Given in the year of our Lord 1669, on the 25th of Nisan."

VIII. Besides these separate testimonials of the belief and doctrine held by the several Christian societies of the East, we have other indisputable attestations concerning all of them conjointly. One of those documents, relating to the various portions of the Greek Church, is found in the acts of the synod of Leucosia in Cyprus, which was celebrated during the year 1668 by Archbishop Nicephorus, with several other bishops and many distinguished clergymen. Of the seven canons of that synod, the first entirely belongs to the question of the Eucharist, and is thus expressed: "If any one says that the bread and wine consecrated by a true priest, after they have been sanctified by certain words which Christ our Lord instituted, are not really and substantially the identical body and blood of the Man-God, our Saviour Jesus Christ; but that they are a figure and a symbol, or that they preserve with the sacrament itself the substance of the bread and wine; and that these are not

destroyed after the consecration, so as to leave only the accidents, and constitute a true, real and perfect transubstantiation, or change of the preceding substance of the bread and wine into the whole substance of the body and blood of our Lord; or that the Eucharist is not a real and unbloody sacrifice, propitiatory for the sins of the living in the sacrament of penance, as of the dead also; or that these mysteries ought not to be adored and worshipped, exactly in the same manner as this same Man-God and Lord Jesus Christ is worshipped and adored, sitting at the right hand of the eternal Father: — let such a one be judged heretic, and subjected to the censures passed against heretics. . . . This is the orthodox faith of the Oriental Church. This is the doctrine of the four patriarchal sees of the East, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. This is also the belief of all the nations which adhere to our communion, of the extensive tribes of the Russians, of the vast empire of the Muscovites, of Bulgaria, of Servia, of Upper and Lower Mesia, of the Arabs and Egyptians, in a word, (not to mention other nations of Asia and Europe,) of all those who receive and venerate the seventh general Council." — Had not this been in truth the faith of these different nations, no doubt the Council of Cyprus, which was held just in the midst of them, never would nor could have dared attribute to them such a doctrine.

The second general attestation, comprising all the schismatical societies of the East, is that of Dositheus, patriarch of Jerusalem, or rather of the numerous synod over which he presided in 1672. The result of this assembly was a synodical treatise signed by the patriarch, by six archbishops, and by fifty-one priests and religious Dositheus sent a copy of it bearing the

subscriptions of the same persons, to the French king Louis XIV; in order that it might be placed and kept in the royal library, as an authentic evidence of the faith and doctrine of the Oriental Churches.* Not satisfied with this, he himself caused it to be printed after the lapse of eighteen years, at Bucharest in Valachia; so that there never was, it may be justly said, a document more authentic and more incontestable than this, as there is none too, more remarkable and explicit for our purpose. The patriarch and the council enter upon the question of the Eucharist, (Art. xvii.) by declaring their own unshaken belief, "that Christ is truly and really present in it; that after the consecration of the bread and wine, the bread is changed, transubstantiated, transformed and converted into the true and identical body of Christ, which was born in Bethlehem of the Virgin, — and the wine is changed and transubstantiated into the identical and true blood of the Lord, which was shed upon the cross for the life of the world; likewise, that after the consecration, there no longer remains the substance of the bread and wine, but the body itself and the blood of Christ in the appearance and figure of bread and wine, that is to say, under the accidents of both." Afterwards we find these words concerning the other Christian societies of the East, separated from the Greeks: "The Nestorians, the Armenians, the Copts, the Syrians, the Ethiopians, who maintain each a peculiar heresy, agree however with us on all that we have hitherto said; as we see and learn in this holy city of Jerusalem, where there are persons from all parts of the world, who either dwell in it, or come hither as pil-

* *Perpétuité de la Foi,* vol. iii. p. 690. — *Scheffmacher,* lettre viii.

grims, whether learned or unlearned." — If Patriarch Dositheus with his numerous synod, had attributed to the aforesaid societies a doctrine which they did not admit, would he not have subjected himself to public scorn and indignation? Had his assertion, so explicit and so unequivocal, contained a falsehood, would not the millions of persons concerned therein, have risen and loudly protested against it? Since therefore none did so, even after the synodical act was printed; does it not follow, that the belief of all the Eastern Christians in the real presence and transubstantiation, is as well ascertained as any human fact has ever been or can possibly be, even for the most envious criticism?

After reading, both in this and in the preceding chapter, the many unquestionable testimonies which we have adduced in proof of the ancient tradition, and of the belief of foreign Churches relative to the holy Eucharist; will it not appear utterly astonishing to find in some modern publications, "that the dogma of transubstantiation was untaught by the Fathers, unknown to the ancient liturgies, and that it is maintained in the Church of Rome alone." Can there be an assumption more strangely bold and more egregiously erroneous; and should not this alone be deemed sufficient to show that all similar assertions made against the tenets of the Catholic Church, are totally undeserving of confidence?

On the other hand, how sad and melancholy a thought must it be for our separated brethren, to find themselves, among all the Christian societies that exist upon earth, to be the only one opposed to the dogma of transubstantiation, and to be, moreover, for want of a valid ministry, necessarily deprived of the real presence of

Christ among them in the Eucharist! How consoling, on the contrary, is it for Catholics to know with entire certainty, not only that they are and have ever been possessed of this inestimable blessing, through a constant succession of duly ordained bishops and priests; but likewise that all the nations of Christendom, (the Protestants alone excepted,) and even those societies which have been separated from the Latin Church for thirteen or fourteen centuries, agree however perfectly with it on the subject of the Eucharistic mystery! Will it not seem to every candid inquirer, that, as Almighty God preserved the Jews from utter destruction, in order to make them, by the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning their fate, the unsuspected witnesses of the divinity of his Son, and of the heavenly origin of Christianity at large: so likewise he has preserved the schismatical societies of the East, in order to render them the unexceptionable witnesses of the antiquity, perpetuity and divine origin of the dogma of the real presence and transubstantiation? In fact, besides their own concurrent and unanimous asseverations; besides, too, the irrefragable testimony deduced from their liturgies, which are substantially no other than the ancient liturgies quoted elsewhere, (page 106,) and to which we here subjoin, for fuller evidence, a few others in a note:* it is evident that these societies,

* The *Liturgy of Nestorius* expresses itself thus: "May the grace of the Holy Ghost come, and dwell, and rest on this oblation; may he sanctify it and make it the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . . that the receiving of these holy mysteries may avail all who receive them, unto eternal life. — May we be worthy with a pure conscience, to partake of the body and blood of Christ."

The *Coptic Liturgy*, called also the *Liturgy of St. Basil*, contains these words: "O Lord Jesus Christ, we beg and intreat thy goodness, O lover of mankind, look down on this bread and on this cha-

having been separated from the Latin Church, some for eight or ten, others for thirteen and fourteen centuries, did not receive from her, after the separation took place, their faith and doctrine on the Eucharist: but that they, as well as the Latin Church herself, received it from the primitive Church, to which their ancestors belonged.

Another very striking circumstance, which presents itself to our notice in this unanimous belief of the Eastern societies, is that they ground their faith, just as Catholics do, not only on apostolical tradition, but also on the words of our Saviour, particularly those which he used in instituting the Eucharist. Now, this very circumstance affords us an additional and invincible proof, that the construction put by Protestants upon those words is wofully wrong, since no Christian society ever thought of it before the time of the pretended reformation; and that the interpretation of Catholics must necessarily be the right one, since we find it universally admitted by those Christians of the East who are their adversaries on other points. What else but the evidence of

lice, which we have placed on this thy sacerdotal table: bless them, sanctify them, and consecrate them; change them, so that indeed this bread may become thy holy body, and that which is mixed in this chalice, thy precious blood."

The *Alexandrian Liturgy*, or *Liturgy of St. Gregory*, says: "Do thou, O Lord, by thy voice, change these offerings. . . . . Do thou send down thy Holy Spirit, that coming, he may sanctify and transmute these precious offerings and holy gifts into the very body and blood of our redemption; and may he make indeed this bread to be thy body, O Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ — and this chalice, thy precious blood of the New Testament. Amen."

See also, besides the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, followed by the Russians and Greeks, that of the Armenians cited above, p. 118.

truth itself could have induced so many different, nay opposite societies, to understand exactly in the same manner the expression of a mystery otherwise so sublime, and so much elevated above man's senses and imagination? Again, since those societies were adverse, not only to the Catholic Church which had condemned them, but also to each other, how could they have unanimously agreed in attaching the same literal meaning to the words of the Gospel which relate to the Eucharist, were not that meaning the only one which these sacred words can receive?

With this forcible consideration, we shall close the series of proofs which we have undertaken to give of the Catholic dogma of the Eucharist. Nothing now remains to be done for the completion of our task, but to refute in a few words the imaginary difficulties which Protestants frequently urge against this imporportant and divine truth.

CHAPTER IV.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

From all that has been hitherto said, we are entitled to conclude that the difficulties which the enemies of transubstantiation urge against this dogma, are but vain sounds and harmless weapons. Since they all contradict the word of God understood in its plain and obvious sense, the tradition delivered by the Apostles, the doctrine contained in the liturgies and taught by the Fathers, and the belief of all nations and ages; hence a candid mind cannot possibly discover in them even a shadow of probability. TRUTH cannot be

opposed to itself: "For the Son of God," says St. Paul, "was not, IT IS, and, IT IS NOT; but, IT IS, was in him."* It being incontestably proved, from the various channels of divine revelation, that Christ, by the change of the Eucharistic elements into his sacred body and blood, is really and substantially present in the Eucharist, most assuredly it cannot be proved, either from the same or from other sources, that he is not present there, and that there is no such thing as transubstantiation.

Here then we might, with propriety, close our remarks, and disregard objections so powerless; still as these objections might perhaps, by being continually repeated with affected assurance, make undue impression on persons little acquainted with the proofs of our doctrine; it will not be amiss to show, once for all, how completely groundless they are in themselves, and how utterly opposed to all the principles of the Christian faith.

All the difficulties brought against the doctrine of transubstantiation, may be reduced to two classes. The first includes those which have no existence except in the imagination of our opponents, and spring from no other source than an intense desire of many among them to find fault with the Catholic Church, whereby they are led to impute to her doctrines which she never admitted. Such, among others, are the following; "that we believe the existence in the Eucharist of sweetness, and nothing sweet, of whiteness, and nothing white; — the digestion of Christ's body in the stomach of the communicant; — the reality of an indefinite number of human bodies in the consecrated

* 2 Corinth. i. 19.

hosts;" — and other like absurdities which the adversaries of the Catholic dogma of the Eucharist are fond of creating, in order to have the satisfaction of refuting them, and to enjoy the advantage of an easy triumph. Nothing indeed is less dearly purchased than a triumph of this kind; but less witticism, and more candor in the authors of the above charges, would have taught them the futility of their statements, and the egregious mistakes which they commit in imputing to Catholics the offsprings of their own prolific and erring fancy.

Catholics, then, do not maintain either directly or indirectly, that consecrated hosts contain an indefinite number of human bodies; they, on the contrary, believe and teach, that it is one and the same body of Christ which the divine omnipotence thus renders present in so many places at once; as the divine nature itself is not only present every where, but also is every where whole and entire, without ceasing to be one and the same divine nature. — Neither do they admit that there is in the Eucharist sweetness and nothing sweet, whiteness and nothing white; they merely say that the color, taste, shape, and other accidents which remain after the consecration, are no longer attached to any substance, and that they are preserved in this condition by the will and power of God, for the exercise of our faith. — Nor do they assert that mere appearances and properties have the natural power of feeding the body, but that Almighty God being himself the author of transubstantiation, produces accordingly by his omnipotence, without the substance of bread and wine, exactly the same effects which in other cases he produces through the natural agency of these elements; and they know nothing more contrary to sound philosophy than to deny such

a power in God, the Creator and Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. In fine, instead of the shocking assertion that "the body and blood of Christ are digested in the stomach;" their doctrine, always consistent with itself, is merely this; that Christ ceases to be present under the species, as soon as they are so altered as to present no longer the form of bread and wine.*

For the same reason, the sad events which may happen to, and the irreverences or sacrilegious outrages which may be committed against the holy Eucharist, though the former are a very great misfortune

* It is painful to observe, that the author of the "Conquest of Mexico" has stooped so low beneath the dignity of a historian, as to make a similar attack upon the Catholic doctrine. In a certain part of his work, he introduces Montezuma establishing a comparison, and finding *perhaps* a *monstrous* similarity between the reception of the body of Christ by Catholics and the bloody feasts of cannibals. Had Mr. Prescott attended but once at our celebration and participation of the sacred mysteries, he would have easily perceived the wide difference with regard to the mode of manducation, which exists between "feeding upon the flesh of our fellow mortals and eating the flesh of our Creator," and *perhaps* would have abstained from designating by the same epithet the *monstrous* practice of the ancient Mexicans, and the sacred banquet instituted by Christ, in which he gives us indeed, according to his promise, his real body and blood, but under a veil, in a preternatural manner, and in order only that they may become in us the seed of eternal life. Mr. Prescott, we are afraid, is of the number of those who take for uncontested truths, the dictates of long standing prejudice. — As to what he calls "the ludicrous effect" of the belief of transubstantiation in Spain, without mentioning any thing in particular, we are unable to guess what may be the object of his censure; but this at least we know for certain, that nothing is so *ludicrous* as the assurance of an author who presumes to judge of religious doctrines and practices, whilst he shows himself to be so imperfectly acquainted with their real character.

and the latter enormous sins in themselves, merely affect, and destroy or profane the sacred species, but do not hurt in the least the body of Christ, which as well in the Eucharist as in heaven, is absolutely impassible. "Christ rising again from the dead," says the Apostle, "dieth now no more; death shall no more have dominion over him." (Rom. vi. 9.) Hence, whatever may happen to the veil which covers him, whatever even may be attempted by an impious profaner against his sacred person in the Eucharist, he is now for ever out of the reach of sufferings, tortures and sorrows. — But though he should be hurt by these deplorable accidents or atrocious crimes, we would have no greater difficulty to believe that our blessed Saviour is yet willing, for the sake of his children, to expose himself to such indignities, than to admit with Protestants themselves that, for the sake of sinners, he submitted to still greater ones during the course of his passion, when he was buffeted, spit upon, scourged and nailed to a cross; or that he once suffered his most implacable enemy, the evil spirit, to touch his sacred body, and transport him from place to place, as we read in the Gospel.*

Thus, all the difficulties against the dogma of the real presence and transubstantiation which we have comprised under the first head, fall of themselves to the ground. Those of the second class, though apparently more specious, as being taken from the real import and consequences of this dogma, and for this reason worthy of a fuller discussion, are in reality neither less unreasonable nor less easily refuted. Let us commence with the one most commonly urged by Pro-

* Matt. iv. 5 — 8.

testants, namely, the opposition, real or pretended, between the belief of transubstantiation and the evidence of our senses. These last, they maintain, unanimously testify to us the presence of bread and wine in the Eucharist, whereas, according to the Catholic doctrine, there is after the consecration no other substance than the body and blood of Christ. Hence, forgetting the words of the Gospel which inculcate this doctrine, they come to the conclusion, that not seeing our Lord in the Eucharist, they cannot believe in his real presence; saying, after the example of the once incredulous St. Thomas: "Unless I see, I will not believe."*

But indeed, what can be more unreasonable than an assumption, according to which, before we admit any thing as true, we must perceive it with our own eyes? What will become of the science of history, of social order and intercourse, of religion itself, if we follow no other rule but the testimony of our senses? In that case, nearly all historical books should be rejected and despised, since what they contain, generally refers to personages whom we never saw, and to events which we did not witness. None but those who have visited in person London, Paris, Constantinople, and Pekin, would be sufficiently qualified to believe the existence of those cities. According to this system, we ought neither to admit in man a spiritual being quite distinct from the body, which we call *mind* or *soul*, as we never beheld it; nor should even the Apostles and first disciples who conversed with our Lord, have believed in his divinity, since their corporal eyes perceived in him nothing but his human nature. So it is

* John xx. 25.

likewise, both in religion and nature, with innumerable other truths, which, not being seen in themselves, must also be denied, if we follow the principle above mentioned; a principle therefore, than which none can be more erroneous, more pernicious and capable of leading us into the most deplorable excess of scepticism and incredulity.

Let it not be objected against this conclusion and the examples just adduced, that they are different from the present case; that, for instance, the divinity of Christ could not and cannot be denied, because we have for it, besides other sure evidences, his own repeated assertion, the truth of which was superabundantly proved by all the wonders and miracles of his life; for, *this* we have also in favor of the dogma of his real and substantial presence in the Eucharist, as we learn from the various channels of divine revelation. Nor let it be said either, that the existence of a spiritual and reasonable soul in every man is demonstrated from a variety of effects which fall under our eyes and notice, and that the reality of foreign cities and past events is attested by those who visited the one and witnessed the others; as if the dogma of the real presence and transubstantiation had no support equal to this! but, if we thus receive the declaration of men or the result of their attentive observation, shall we not also receive the infallible testimony of the Son of God, when he speaks to us about the reality of his flesh and blood in the Eucharist? Is he less entitled to credit than his creatures? Is not his sacred word, though it should seem contrary to the express report of our eyes and taste, worthy of our most implicit confidence, and of the fullest homage of our understanding and our will? So far indeed is Christian faith from

depending and resting upon our sight or personal experience, that, on the contrary, St. Paul calls it "the conviction of things that appear not," and says it "cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."* He teaches the same of the virtue of hope, of which faith is the foundation, saying: "Hope that is seen, is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he hope for?" — and our Saviour himself had declared: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed."†

It is, therefore, certain that, should our Lord strictly bid us renounce and reject altogether the testimony of our senses concerning the Eucharist, even then we ought to submit without the least hesitation, and readily say with a great doctor and a great saint:

> Sight, taste, feeling, are deceived in thee;
> But hearing alone is sufficient to make us believe without any fear of error:
> I believe whatever the Son of God has said;
> Nothing is more incontestably true than this word of truth.‡

But, besides this, if we consider the subject in another point of view, we shall find that there is no real opposition between the dogma of transubstantiation and the testimony of our senses. According to the former, there is no longer *the substance* of bread and wine in the Eucharist after the consecration; according to the latter, *the appearances* or *outward qualities* of the bread and wine still remain. Now both these things are

* Heb. xi. 1. — Rom. x. 17. † Rom. viii. 24. — John xx. 29.

‡ Visus, tactus, gustus, in te fallitur;
Sed auditu solo tutò creditur.
Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius;
Nil hoc veritatis verbo verius. — *S. Thom. Aquin.*

true; we know the one from the infallible word of God, and we really see the other, namely those appearances or accidents which truly remain, though the substance of the bread and wine no longer subsists. Thus, we are by no means obliged to renounce the testimony of our senses, since it has for its object only those exterior qualities which continue to appear in the Eucharist; we are merely commanded by the word of him whose dominion over us is sovereign and eternal, to alter our judgment with regard to the substance itself that is present under the eucharistic veils after the consecration, and to believe it to be no other than the substance of our Saviour's body and blood; since he himself has said it, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. This is what St. Cyril of Jerusalem so well explained to his neophytes in the following words, which we have quoted elsewhere: "JUDGE NOT OF THE THING BY YOUR TASTE, but by faith assure yourself without the least doubt, that you are honored with the body and blood of Christ. . . This knowing, and of this being assured that *what appears to be bread*, is not bread, though it be taken for bread by the taste, but the body of Christ; and that *what appears to be wine*, is not wine, though the taste will have it so, but the blood of Christ."*

And let it not be feared from this, that all certainty about the reality of material substances in general, should be impaired by the belief of transubstantiation. Such a fear would be as groundless, and the conclu-

* Μὴ ἀπὸ τῆς γεύσεως κρίνῃς τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως πληροφοροῦ ἀνενδοιάστως σώματος καὶ αἵματος Χριστοῦ καταξιωθείς . . . Ταῦτα μαθὼν, καὶ πληροφορηθεὶς ὡς ὁ φαινόμενος ἄρτος, οὐκ ἄρτος ἐστὶν, εἰ καὶ τῇ γεύσει αἰσθητὸς, ἀλλὰ σῶμα Χριστοῦ· καὶ ὁ φαινόμενος οἶνος, οὐκ οἶνος ἐστιν, εἰ καὶ ἡ γεῦσις τοῦτο βούλεται, ἀλλὰ αἷμα Χριστοῦ.—*Catech. Mystag.* iv. *n.* 6. 9.

sion drawn from it as illogical, as if one, reflecting upon the miracle which stopped the waters of the Jordan, or upon the resurrection of Lazarus, were to apprehend lest all other rivers should cease to flow, or lest the immense multitude of the dead should, before the end of the world, suddenly come forth from their graves, re-appear amongst us, and claim their respective property from the actual possessors. The great diversity of times in which transubstantiation is effected, does not make any difference in the two cases with regard to the logical inference to be drawn from them, since it is *exclusively* in the Eucharistic sacrifice that this great prodigy takes place. It is *only* in reference to the Eucharist, that Christ our Lord has forewarned us not to judge of its nature from the testimony of our bodily senses, but to believe, according to the plain import of his words, that there is no other substance in it after the consecration, except his body and blood, although the appearances of bread and wine still remain. As no admonition of the kind has been given us about the other objects by which we are surrounded, there is no reason whatever to doubt their reality, when ascertained by the uniform testimony of our senses. The natural inclination which prompts us to believe in the existence of these objects, preserves all its efficacy; and we are, notwithstanding the transubstantiation which takes place in the Eucharist, as sure that the other visible things preserve their own material substances, as we are that rivers continue to flow into the sea, notwithstanding the miracle of the Jordan; and that the bodies of the dead continue to sleep in their graves in expectation of the day of judgment, notwithstanding the resurrection of Lazarus.

This, however, does not suffice to satisfy our dissenting brethren upon the main point at issue, the dogma itself of the real presence and transubstantiation. To them the presence of the body of Christ, at the same time in heaven and on earth, — in so small a compass as a host or a particle thereof, — and in so many places at once, seems incredible and impossible. To them it appears that the substance of the bread and wine, so long at least as their outward form remains, cannot be changed into another substance; and they have learned also from physical laws and human philosophy that accidents, or exterior qualities and appearances, cannot exist without a subject. They do not understand these mysteries, and therefore think themselves sufficiently authorized to reject them altogether.

To these we answer, first, that exterior qualities or appearances, though ordinarily attached to certain material things, must not be confounded with the substances themselves upon which they are made naturally to depend. We conceive without any difficulty that, by an act of the divine power, bodies may be deprived of their natural and ordinary properties; as was the case with the three children in the furnace of Babylon, where the fire into which they were plunged did not so much as consume their garments (Dan. iii. 94), and also with our Saviour and St. Peter, whilst they walked upon the waters of the lake of Genezareth, (Matt. xiv. 25, 29;) or that these bodies may be endowed with new qualities and forms, as when our Lord, on the day of his resurrection, came where his disciples were gathered together, *the doors being shut for fear of the Jews*, (John xx. 19;) and when on the same day he appeared *in another form* to two of them

who were going into the country, (Mark xvi. 12.) Nay, similar wonders daily happen in petrifactions, where the form, the shape, and the texture even of the most delicate fibres, are still visible, though the particles of the organic body have been displaced by those of a stony substance.

Holy Writ and sound reason likewise teach us, that HE, to whom all created beings and physical laws are subjected, can change one substance into another, as he did at Cana of Galilee in presence of his disciples, and at the court of Pharao through the ministry of Moses. Nor will this appear astonishing to any one who knows the wonderful, though natural, transformations, that have been brought to light by the discoveries of modern chemistry.*

Concerning the other two points, multilocation and the greater or less extent of the same material substance; besides our utter ignorance of the real character of the relation which the body of Christ in the Eucharist may bear to extension and locality, 1. it is admitted by naturalists that all the matter contained in the universe, *a fortiori*, a small portion of it, might be reduced to an indefinitely smaller space, and even, according to some, Newton, etc. to no more than a cubic inch: and 2. it cannot be proved that multilocation, or simultaneous presence of the same body in

* By adducing this and other examples of the surprising effects of natural laws themselves, we do not mean on any account to say that the Eucharistic transubstantiation takes place in the same manner, since we believe it to be above all the laws of nature; but we intend to show, (and the above examples are well fitted for this purpose,) that the visible creation itself is full of wonders and phenomena, which may be justly looked upon as beautiful analogies and striking emblems of the wonders daily wrought by God in the Eucharist.

several places, has any thing repugnant to sound philosophy, even with regard to a human body in its ordinary condition; much less in reference to the glorified body of Christ and its sacramental mode of existence.* Above all, we have the infallible word of God, which assures us that this great prodigy is not merely possible with him, but moreover that it does really take place in the Eucharistic Mystery.

It follows from all this, that the various objections of Protestants against the dogma of the real presence and transubstantiation, being constantly based on their forgetfulness of the difference which exists between the common order of things and the extraordinary effects of the power of God, between the natural state of bodies and the preternatural state of the body of Christ in the Eucharist, are contrary, not only to the doctrines of the Christian faith, but likewise to the essential principles of good and sound reasoning.

Can this, therefore, (and we here come to our second and chief answer,) can this be the true way of ascertaining one of the most sublime mysteries of religion? Is it from the order of nature, from human conceptions and physical laws, that we are to judge of the supernatural and much higher order of divine revelation? Not knowing so much as the real essence of objects which are continually around us, of bodies, of matter, of place, of extent, and other qualities or beings even considered in their ordinary light; how can we pretend to know them better in reference to a super-

* See Bellarmine, *De Sacramento Eucharistiæ*, L. iii. c. 3, 4, — Abbè de Lignac, in his work entitled, *Présence corporelle de l'homme en plusieurs lieux à la fois, prouvée possible par les principes de la bonne philosophie;* — and the celebrated Protestant Leibnitz, in his theological essays.

natural order of things, together with that order itself in all its bearings and appendages? Yet, all these objects should be clearly and perfectly ascertained, before we venture to pass, not only a sweeping judgment, but even any judgment at all, on the intrinsic nature of the Eucharistic mystery. Otherwise, we would be like a man born blind, who should undertake to treat of the wonders of vision, which he was never allowed to witness, or who, not being able to form any idea of colors, should deny on that account their possibility and existence. In truth, what are we all, without the light of faith, except miserable and blind creatures: "Thou knowest not, that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind?"* — "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts."† Even a great Apostle exclaims: "O the depth of the riches, of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!"‡ And shall we poor mortals refuse to admit that Almighty God knows infinitely more than we can imagine — can do infinitely more than we can comprehend? Whilst our Lord is pleased in his immense charity for men, to communicate himself entirely to every one of the faithful through the mystery of the Eucharist, as he was pleased to communicate himself to mankind at large through the mystery of the Incarnation; shall we presume to oppose the designs of his infinite goodness and liberality? And since, moreover, he has pledged his word for it,

* Apoc. iii. 17. † Isa. lv. 8, 9. ‡ Rom. xi. 33.

ought not that sacred word remove for ever all the difficulties to the contrary, suggested by our senses, our imagination, or our pride? Otherwise, if we must understand the nature of every thing and see that it is conformable to physical laws, before it becomes an object of our belief, upon what grounds shall we rest our Christian faith in the mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, Original Sin, and many others, which are not less above human comprehension, than the dogma of transubstantion and the real presence? Nay, what will then become of the miracles of the Bible, the prophecies of the Ancient and New Testament, in a word, all the supernatural evidences of a divine religion; and how shall we be able, consistently with the principle just mentioned, to avoid falling by rapid strides into naturalism, deism and complete infidelity?

This, Luther himself well understood and strongly inculcated against the enemies of the real presence. When he was asked how could a body be contained in so narrow a space as a host, and be rendered present in so many places at the same time, he easily reduced to nought all these vain difficulties raised by the proud reason of man against the word of God, and in his turn asked his opponents whether they understood how the Almighty preserved the Unity of his nature in the Trinity of his persons? How he formerly created heaven and earth out of nothing; how he united human flesh to his Eternal Son: how he caused him to be born of a Virgin; how he delivered him up to death, and how he would raise again all men to life to the last day. They say, added Luther, that all the miracles of Christ were visible. "But who has told them that our Lord resolved never to perform any miracle of another kind? When he was conceived by the power of the Holy

Ghost in the womb of a Virgin, was this miracle, the greatest of all, any way visible? Was the fulness of the Godhead, which dwells corporally in Jesus Christ, visible on earth? Do we see him sitting at the right hand of his Father, from whence he exercises his sovereign power over the whole universe? Is this the reason which obliges them to torture, to tear in pieces, to crucify the words of their Master? We do not understand, they say, how he can render them literally true. This proves well, indeed, that the sense of man does not agree with the wisdom of God; I confess it, I acknowledge it: but never have I known that we are to believe only what we perceive with our own eyes, or what human reason can comprehend."*

RECAPITULATION — CONCLUSION.

Let us now compress into a brief summary, what has been hitherto said in the course of this treatise.

I. The question about the real presence and transubstantiation, is not a question of abstract reasoning, but one of fact, to be settled, like other facts appertaining to revelation, from testimony and evidence. This evidence, Catholics manifestly possess in the Scripture, in Tradition, in the writings of the Fathers, the acts of General Councils, in the Liturgies, and the unanimous belief of the most ancient societies of Christians. Therefore, the Catholic dogma on the Eucharist is as certain and undeniable as any other article of Religion, the Trinity, the Incarnation, etc

* Sermo de Corp. et Sang. Christi: *quod verba adhuc stent.*

II. The same dogma was always held and taught by the Church from the very age of the Apostles, exactly as it is at present; this has also been proved from a variety of documents and facts. Therefore again, it ought to be admitted as necessarily true, since the Church is our unerring and divinely appointed guide in matters of faith; Christ himself having said: "If *any one* will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican;" (Matt. xviii. 16.)

III. Hence it follows that there neither is nor can be any thing absurd or impossible in the Eucharistic mystery as admitted by Catholics. The very act of attempting to find any thing of the kind in it, is, to say the least, *rash* and *presumptuous* in the extreme: it is to suppose that God, the eternal and sovereign Truth, can reveal, and that his Church, founded upon the immovable rock of the true faith (Matt. xvi. 18,) can believe, something absurd and impossible. Moreover, among the numberless saints, learned men and holy doctors, whose names adorn the pages of Church history, none ever discovered or even suspected such difficulties in the real presence and transubstantiation, though they knew very well the full extent of this mystery. Consequently, these supposed contradictions which are brought against us, do not exist, and never did exist; nor will any one be more excusable in the sight of God for yielding to unbelief or doubt on their account, than were the Jews and many of our Lord's disciples, who, after hearing his discourse at Capharnaum, asked with murmurs how he could possibly give them his flesh to eat; and departing from him, ceased to belong thenceforth to his blessed company. (John vi. 53, 61, 67.)

IV. Let then the adversaries of the Catholic dogma on the Eucharist, learn at last where real impossibility is to be found. It is in the system of those who admit that God, notwithstanding his unconditional promise of perpetual guidance and protection, (Matt. xxviii. 20, and xvi. 18,) abandoned his Church so far as to let her substitute human traditions for divine truths, and fall into error, superstition, and idolatry. It is, in the system of those who maintain that Christ did not mean or intend to give us in the Eucharist his real body and blood, although he made use of expressions which plainly signify both; that likewise, the five inspired writers who speak of this mystery, and whose words every where imply the reality, intended to express only a figure, sign or virtue of the body of our Saviour; and that the same is to be said of all the Fathers and doctors of the Church, so as to admit all these learned and holy men to have constantly vied with each other in violating the most ordinary rules of language. Again, it is to be found in the system of those who assert that a change of doctrine may have taken place in the Church about the Eucharist, although the mere supposition of such a fact involves insuperable difficulties, and not a single document exists to prove the coincidence of those numberless disturbances which an innovation of this kind would unavoidably have excited; finally, in the system of those who are obliged to suppose, that the schismatic societies of the East could have anywise agreed with the Catholic Church in their belief of the real presence and transubstantiation, had it not been for the evidence of truth, manifestly contained in the words of Christ, in apostolic tradition, and in the faith of the ancient Church to which their ancestors belonged.

Such are, instead of the *apparent difficulties* of the Catholic doctrine, the *real contradictions* which are to be met with in the Protestant system about the Eucharist, and to which a reasonable answer never has been given and never will be. So true it is, as a man of superior mind (Bossuet) remarks, that unbelievers and adversaries of the sacred mysteries of religion, in order to discard the belief of INCOMPREHENSIBLE TRUTHS, throw themselves headlong into an abyss of INCOMPREHENSIBLE ERRORS.

V. How different from this is the doctrine of the Catholic Church, with its unquestionable proofs, its universality, its antiquity, its perpetuity, its apostolic origin, its unshaken foundation in the word of God, and its innumerable advantages for time and eternity! All these consoling characters are beautifully expressed in the language of the Church herself, and particularly in the words of her last general Council, that of Trent, with which we shall therefore conclude this treatise on the Eucharistic mystery.

Concerning the *real presence*, the Council "openly and plainly professes, that in the august sacrament of the holy Eucharist, after the consecration of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man, is truly, really and substantially present under the appearance of those sensible objects. Nor is there any repugnance in this, that our Saviour, according to his natural manner of existence, should always remain in heaven at the right hand of his Father, and that nevertheless he should be sacramentally, though substantially, present with us in many other places, in that way of existence, which, though in words we can hardly express it, the mind illumined by faith can conceive to be possible to God, and which we are bound firmly to

believe. For so all our ancestors — as many as were members of the true Church of Christ — who wrote on the subject of this most holy sacrament, openly professed; that our Saviour instituted this admirable sacrament at the last supper, when, after the blessing of the bread and wine, he declared in express and perspicuous words, that he gave his own body and blood: which words, recorded first by the holy evangelists and then repeated by St. Paul, plainly convey of themselves this obvious and proper signification, in which they have been understood by the Fathers."*

Concerning *the holy sacrifice of the Mass:* "Although our God and our Lord Jesus Christ was about to offer himself once on the altar of the cross to his Father, that on it he might operate our eternal redemption; yet, because by death his priesthood was not to cease, he, at his last supper, the same night in which he was betrayed, (1 Cor. xi. 23,) that he might leave to his Church a visible sacrifice, such as the nature of man requires, by which the bloody sacrifice once to be completed on the cross should be represented, and its memory should continue to the end of time, and its salutary virtue be applied to the remission of those sins which we daily commit; declaring himself to be the appointed priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech, he offered to his Father his body and blood under the appearances of bread and wine, and under those symbols, delivered the same to his Apostles, whom at the time he appointed the priests of the New Testament. To them and to their successors in the priesthood, he commanded to offer the same, saying: *Do this for a commemoration of me;*" (Luke xxii. 19.)†

*Sess. XIII. cap. i. †Sess. XXII. cap. i.

On *Transubstantiation:* "As Christ our Redeemer declared *that* to be truly his body, *which* he offered under the appearance of bread; therefore was it always firmly believed in the Church of God, and the same this holy synod again announces, that, by the consecration of the bread and wine, a change is made of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change has been, by the holy Catholic Church, justly and properly called Transubstantiation."*

On *the honor and worship due to Christ in the holy Eucharist:* "There is no room left for doubt, that all the faithful ought, according to the constant practice of the Church, to honor this most holy sacrament by the worship of Latria, which is due to the true God; nor is it to be the less adored, because Christ our Lord instituted it in order that it should be received. For, that same God we do believe to be really present in it, whom the Eternal Father introduced into the world, saying; And let all the Angels of God adore him; — (Heb. i. 6.) Whom the wise men, falling down, adored; (Matt. ii. 11.) — Whom, in fine, the Scripture testifies to have been adored by the Apostles in Galilee; (Matt. xxviii. 17.)†

On *the worthy and frequent reception of this admirable Sacrament:* "Since it is unbecoming to approach any sacred function otherwise than in a holy manner; assuredly, the better the sanctity and divinity of this heavenly sacrament is known to Christians, the greater care they ought to have never to receive it without great respect and a great purity of conscience, being mindful of these awful words of the Apostle:

* Sess. XIII. cap. iv. † Sess. XIII. cap. v.

He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord; (1 Cor, xi. 29.) Wherefore, every one who wishes to receive communion, should recollect the precept enjoined by the same Apostle: Let a man prove himself: (Ib. 28.) Now, this is the probation which the ecclesiastical practice declares to be necessary, that no one who is conscious to himself of a mortal sin, however contrite he may think himself to be, should approach the sacred table, without having previously made his sacramental confession. . . . . .

"Finally, the holy Council admonishes, exhorts, requests and entreats through the bowels of the mercy of our God, all those who bear the name of Christian, to agree at length and meet together in this sign of unity, in this bond of charity, in this symbol of peace; to remember the adorable majesty and the immense love of our Lord Jesus Christ, who laid down his precious life as the price of our salvation, and gave us his flesh to eat; then, to believe and honor these sacred mysteries of his body and blood, by such a steady and lively faith, by so great a devotion, piety and respect, as to be worthy to receive often this supersubstantial bread, and truly find in it the life of their souls and the constant welfare of their minds: so that, being strengthened by it, they may pass from the miseries of this earthly pilgrimage to their heavenly country, where they shall eat, without any veil, this same bread of Angels which they eat here below under the sacred veil of the Eucharist."*

"Demum autem paterno affectu admonet sancta Synodus, hortatur, rogat, et obsecrat per viscera misericordiæ Dei nostri, ut omnes et singuli, qui Christiano

* Sess. XIII. cap. vii. et viii.

nomine censentur, in hoc unitatis signo, in hoc vinculo charitatis, in hoc concordiæ symbolo jam tandem aliquandò conveniant et concordent, memoresque tantæ majestatis, et tam eximii amoris Jesu Christi Domini nostri, qui dilectam animam suam in nostræ salutis pretium, et carnem suam nobis dedit ad manducandum; hæc sacra mysteria corporis et sanguinis ejus eâ fidei constantiâ et firmitate, eâ animi devotione, ac pietate et cultu credant et venerentur, ut panem illum supersubstantialem frequenter suscipere possint, et is verè eis sit animæ vita et perpetua sanitas mentis: cujus vigore consortati, ex hujus miseræ peregrinationis itinere ad cœlestem patriam pervenire valeant, eumdem panem Angelorum, quem modò sub sacris velaminibus edunt, absque ullo velamine manducaturi."

THE END.

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A TREATISE

ON THE

Eucharistic Mystery,

OR DEFENCE

OF THE CATHOLIC DOGMA

OF THE

EUCHARIST

AGAINST THE RECENT ATTACKS OF ADVERSARIES.

BY PETER FREDET, D.D.

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